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UNWRITTEN LIFE.

BY W. M. BICKNELL.

JUNE roses and the zephyrs of June, with its dewy mornings, soft twilights, singing birds, and the golden rays of its round, red, ripe sun, enter into the receptive heart; but in words they go not out again to strike the air or track their way along the printed page.

“Airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves.”

Much more do the delights of nature, such as these, attune the soul strung with the chords of a divine susceptibility, and give it a glow, a joy, a peace, too rich to tell. Much of life cannot be said or sung or written. Though of the making of books there is no end, yet there is but little of a child's sparkling eyes, sporting hands, throbbing bosom, sparkling, sporting, throbbing, within the arms of a fatherly, motherly Providence, that can be made into a book, — little of a good man's rest, in the embrace of integrity, of truth, and of God,

that can be sent to the press. Canst thou draw out of a little girl's mind, with hook or pen, the grief that is there because of her doll all broken and spoiled? The small leviathan of pain must swim there alone, unseen, in his native sea. Thou canst not draw out with a *line*. Sorrow is very deep. It does not rise to the levels of writing tablets. No one knows his own distress but himself, and the searching, all-knowing Spirit. Can mother, or motherly aunt, apprehend and dispatch, in the mail-bag, her little man's satisfaction at putting on his first manly suit, — with a pocket in it? Many a joy flies high upward towards its Source, and is too buoyant to come down and inscribe itself. The risen consciousness, risen from beneath the incubus of heedlessness and sin; time not used, and the great gift thrown away; then the bud and growth of a tender repentance, and the turning back to one's self and to the God of the penitent, — these will not embark on printer's ink, and there ride before our eyes.

The heart is greater than books, and they cannot measure it. The heart is older than books, and they cannot go back and record its everlasting beginning, — cannot tell what it is, delineate its daily pulse of joy and sorrow. Books cannot paint the immortal hopes of the heart lighted up, and shone upon from the future and from heaven. The heart is not one earthen vessel and the book another, and the things of the Spirit poured from one into the other, as oil and wine are poured. The heart that is John's is of most respectable and heavenly lineage, and out of the life of God it comes to sojourn in these parts. By other methods, then, than the untutored rustic's mark or cross it signifies the bond between itself and Mary. Her love is taught after the same high system, and is above engrossing itself in a billet. Each is glad in the possession of the other. Each knows the other's gladness by his own, — by her own. Neither poet nor angel can write it. The feelings, social and religious, so nobly born can never find full expression in this lower language of ours. The participating instincts of man and man must associate, — must seek the real forms as they came from on

high. Men sit down by each other, and through the willing gates of mutual being pass to and fro.

“Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due, thy heart
Contains of good, wise, just, the *perfect shape*.”

The post-office serves me but poorly. I must have my prerogatives, heed the heavenly call, and away to my friend, or my friend must stop folding notes and away to me. Many a European for years reads of noble and excellent men living on these shores. It is not enough. Their faint images in books and letters he throws down. He will come and see the original life of original souls in America. The same necessity draws from here to the lands of our fathers. Existence, which the invention of Cadmus knows not of, is thick within all borders and in every habited spot. Knowledge, friendship, love, live only in apartments not made with hands. Wouldst thou know the Psalms? Having read, leave the Psalms and retire within the chamber no carpentry formed. Sitting there, the grace of the spirit will show them to the sitter.

The aspirations ascend far up, and the feathered quill cannot fly so high and write them. The longings have no biographers to tell how uneasy they go up and down the earth, and range within the bars of time and sense. It is not to be written how unsatisfied the best appetites feed from off common tables. The noble ambitions, at times, lie still and think and muse, — brood over this big, round earth, as over an egg, waiting for something to break shell, and appear worthy of human desires and capacities. Sometimes losing the grandeur of heaven-born mein, they sink down with folded wing, as if the universe were hollow, — all vacuity but man's great hunger. Deep soundings below the plane of literature do the meditations make, dredging in the sea of being and destiny. They do this by the fireside, on the sunny bank, in the still shade of the summer grove, where the brook runs dreamily along, when the ear hears the waters of the ocean, and the eye sees the wide, billowy

field, or when the feet stand upon the mountain. At such times and places the heaven-plumed aspirations often get free from burdens, and rise easily to truth,—high up, on steady wing, soar in the realms of faith. When the mind is thus clear, it mirrors, as no sacred lore can, the clear heavens,—the warm sun and the bright stars of the over-arching skies. Then a man's joys do not stick in his throat; he does not see a lion in the way; he does not say the harness is lacking, and the forces cannot be led out and put in gear,—his sorrows do not run down a steep place with him into the sea, or take him into the wilderness.

The thoughts are swift, and they outrun the winged words. The affections are too strong, the emotions too deep, for the most life-like page. Was the breath of God ever put in manuscript? be that breath in the baby with his dawning intelligence, and the opening of the divine and the human in him; be that breath of the Almighty pent up in the eager boy, letting out its eagerness upon books and bird's nest, or in man, testing its forces through the flesh, with human will and responsibility, upon work and play, money and conduct; or be that breath of the great Spirit in the soul, breathing back to the Most High in worship, in devotion, in love and good works. There is many a good man and scholar who cannot, in prose or verse or song, tell how happy have been some passages in his life,—cannot utter what liking he has for his friends, cannot express what enjoyment and newness of vision some books have given him. The types are not founded for printing, the ingredients of air not mixed for communicating, from the organs of speech, the revelation of beauty and the zest of the spirit some of us received, in the season of impressive youth, all alert and new, from the first reading of Virgil beneath an apple-tree, with a canopy of blossoms overhead, and sun and birds and bees all around. Printing House Square need not, in advance, advertise, "First Impressions Made on a Young Mind by the 'Arabian Nights.'" For the copy will never be carried up by the boy to the compositors. The author will never get on paper the imprint given to his boyish imagination by the mystic

grandeur of that book, by its wonderful fabrications and enchanting scenes.

Poor would be the book that is published if it did not impart something to this fluid nature of man that cannot be published. That is, the good book is an earthen vessel, in which to gather up some drops from the ocean of infinite wisdom and being, and from it pour into our little cup. Or, in other words, the pen is a wand, in skillful hands, to conjure up to the heart and fancy what the pen itself cannot depict. In a sense, what is in a book the reader puts into it. The page is a dead level, the heart and the imagination are the magician to raise from below the surface all surpassing forms.

It is a great thing to live. Since man cannot be traced in lettered lines, the stage has been built to enact him, pictures are painted to exhibit him, statues shaped to embody him. I have seen a reed stand in the waters of a dark and sedgy stream, palpitating and quivering with the ceaseless current. So we all, rooted to the ground, do sway to and fro with inexpressible desires, and with the Infinite entering this finite. Words are dumb to express what a world of soul was in Shakespeare, — what a builder, building the temple of civilization, is the Bible. Not to be delineated is the gladness with which right minds are glad that enemies, Mrs. P. on one side of the broad aisle of the church and Mrs. Q. on the other, a northern nation in Europe and a southern, are getting friendly, and beginning to mellow and mingle, — glad the war is over and slavery gone and unity forming, that the seasons know their courses, and that light is on all shores from Other Shores. When by emotions of great gratitude, praise, wonder, worship, sublimity, the soul, as on a wave, is borne above these flats, — when, by the raptures of music, one is caught heavenward, — at such times language is inarticulate, and can only give forth something like squeak and gibber, as once did the "sheeted dead" "in the Roman streets."

As there is an aroma, a perfume, a sweetness, which flowers and fruits and spicery cannot hold and be the meas-

ure of, so the things of heart and mind and character cannot be inclosed in what is said or sung or written. The whole East Indiaman, above decks and below, the whole storied warehouse, is fragrant with the small parcels of fragrant products. The loveliness of the landscape, the freshness of foliage, the bleating of domestic herds, the beauteousness of murmuring rills and pebbly brooks, the majestic flow of the mighty river, the awe of the lofty mountain, — all *these* speak for themselves. How, then, can *syllables* put forth all there is in love and friendship, and leave nothing for the kindly act to do, the gentle expression and the beaming eye? Lore and learning, in all the books of all times, are great; but greater is that which stands behind universal literature. Some improvement, before unheard of, must be made in the printing press before it can make one's prayers for him. Often, in his most aspiring mood, he cannot make them himself in that which drops from the tongue. The simplest language is too material. Silently the heart yearns towards the heavenly, and the Spirit maketh intercession with longings that cannot be uttered. The prayer-book, so serviceable, used aright, in the congregation and at the breakfast-table, is only a vehicle to carry the heart and the affections to God, — from the hands of a good workman, a better framing of words than most could order for the occasion. The prayer itself is of the soul, and of the great helping Presence.

The eloquence of heart and mind, eye and lips, hearer and reporter, have no method yet invented for packing and preserving. Good teaching is where the teacher gives out more the spirit than the sound of the tongue. Communings are real and with the real. The interposed book or bible, psalm or sermon, they pierce through and through, running direct to their object, like rays of sun boring through films of fog. It hath been often seen how men of Godly cast, affecting the things of olden time, put behind them land and water and domestic convenience that they may stand by the remains of hoary age, so instinct with the riddle of humanity and with thoughts of the divine. Not unobserved are the loves of lovers, with whom, when it goes heavenliest with them, the

world, covered all over with great concerns, is a very little thing, left by them to wag as it can in planetary space. If the two bodies, laboring under mutual attraction, still hang on the outer verge of school-day tuition, they throw study and books to the dogs,—figuratively. Home has lost its sweetness to them. Eye and heart and hand of the two are very sick to everybody else: to each other they are endued with health and vigor and proper status surpassing medicine. Great is love when one is in the midst of it,—love to one's kind, to the Friend of one's kind, to the Father of one's kind. Of most practical, unrepresented, and inside significance is the true fellowship of Christians at the Lord's table.

“They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy.”

How inexpressible our feelings when we ascend to the high places of our being, and contemplate the great purposes of the Almighty unfolding age after age! When at such heights, how poor a receptacle is language to the heart that swells with holy pride and inspiration, in view of the great things of this human-nature divine! How indescribable the scene when unflinching Faith goes down to the low places of mankind,—to the depths of wretchedness,—and looks upon the denizens of eternity covered with rags and filth! What poet that thrills our hearts so wonderfully can describe the pulsations that, from so high up, moved his? With not half the light which covers the face of the virtuous man, can virtue shine that is written upon the page. Indignation at moral wrong, set up in types, is as a smoking mass which all the winds cannot blow into a blaze. The indignation of the man that is wronged, or of his sympathetic brother, is a clear, consuming flame, caught from the altar of God. What art, in poetry, painting, or sculpture, so marvelous as the artist? No Madonna so charming as the soul that first conceived the loveliness, and gave it outward form. No St. Peter's so grand as the mind that first had all the grandeur in itself, and projected it in stone and mortar. No poem so beautiful as the mind of the poet.

A company of the genial, intelligent, and pure-hearted are happy together, around the dining-table, or dispersed about the parlor, or scattered on the lawn as the sower would cast a handful of seed. These persons are so many well-set notes in the scale of companionship and pleasure. The scale is a transposition. For the witty, the gay, the jovial, the wise, loving, and human are second in man, first in God. Whence these souls, thus attuned and filled, but from the Soul of the universe? What these individuals but the harmonies of fun and wit and goodness,—coalescing drops from the fountain of primitive being? The fine elixir and wine ethereal and divine, which the guests give and take, has the sparkle of life only as it passes from one to another. No member of editorial staff need think to mingle with the sprightliness and culture, or with returning step station himself by tree or pillar, with the purpose of getting a bottle or two of this delicate essence wherewith to regale his customers.

How well and nobly many a person carries himself, how high life looks, yet we see before us a vessel that is very earthen. It has got to us that there is nobility and highness in the earthen vessel from the breath and spirit of God. How do that below and that above co-exist? How does the divine dispose of itself in man, abnegated and brought down to the point of the human? Does it do this? And is man all his days and years retracing surrendered ground back to the divine? it being given him to achieve himself, in some sense, and for *himself* assert the highest? Who can open this that is hidden, as one would uncover the bees busy at their task, and show us this swarming mystery working itself in the hive of humanity? The darkness of the infinite out besets this path of life. *Into* the infant enters the divine handiwork,—*out of* him comes so much that is human. The mother puts her little child away from her that he may try his inexperienced feet in coming to her arms again. The dear return, so tenderly watched, and the sweet embrace! Such is it between infantile humanity and the great Parent. The Father, in part, places his children away from him a space. Then is it an epic, never framed by the hand of art,

and greater than any which has come down from classic times, how we all, through a world of circumstances, uncertainties, hindrances, and furtherances, thread our way back into loving paternal arms. "Nearer, my God, to Thee," — God, under some name or some attribute, — sounds along the line with every fresh act of creative skill, every gain of truth, every triumph of right, every closing decade of civilization and Christianity. The campaign has outward movement, but the drawing from heaven is secret, and secret the approaches of heart and soul to it.

Who can botanize much upon the closely packed bud of childhood and manhood? Whence and how act the forces that open the tender petals? Are the faculties, like young birds in a nest, lying side by side? Or is the mind one, — one pipe playing the many variations of life, with delegated power playing itself, or partly? But while we stand here, we stand so much on the other side, and cannot cross over either way to get complete views. High parentage is certain, and certain these very common tasks. The farm boy, by driving cows, planting corn, reaches first-class intelligence, ability, skill. It is not to be mapped out. The dew upon the grass of a summer's morning runs into spheres because sun and planets once took those fluid shapes. The little copies its roundness from the immense. Whether a man study language, sail a ship, collect specimens from the fishes of all waters, point a telescope, or do any other right thing, these are forces about him which fashion and ensphere his intelligence after the image of the Highest. Ah, these microcosms of children and men, formed from affinities and models near and far! Penned or pictured, blood and life, from their nearness or distance, have gone out of them to us. Great nature is ours, free and at large, uncaught by any nets of human device. "Father, I cannot understand how I am alive when I am asleep." — "Neither do I, my son." — "Father, when I laugh is it the fun bubbling up in my mind?" — "Perhaps so, my little philosopher, — I cannot quite tell." — "Father, where was my love when I didn't love Johnny, — was it hid in a dark place, or wasn't it born?"

Such and the like is the material to form questions of, lying all about, rising up the scale of being to the mystery of Godliness.

Where is the book and chapter that exhibits to the eye how the study of the classics makes a man order better the care of his acres and build a finer cottage? The processes are beneath the surface, — the threads exceedingly fine. From Greek letters, born on a peninsula in Europe, descend, through high-born veins, to a neighbor of ours the tasty yard and grounds, — such great grandchildren are such yard and grounds. One canopy of heaven is over all beauty. Is not the spirit of beauty one, embracing curves and colors, forms and features, the plays of Euripides, the flowers, the gospels of holiness? Do these seem separate and distinctive? It is because the all-sidedness of the infinite is so much below our horizon. But, ah, the widening and changing of that horizon as the traveler advances! There is no chart of it, — no differential calculus. The glory and joy of beauty are high, profound, immeasurable as man.

It were a long story, that no one can tell, how and from how many sources mortals draw in the immortal increase of affection and understanding. "All things are yours," says Paul. All things are favorable to incoming newness of life. Change of scene jogs the powers. Intercourse with men subsoils the mind for deeper roots and wider spreading branches. A most regardful and loving teacher carried to a boy a Latin grammar. To the last day of his life the learner will hold this as a priceless benefit. From one case learn all. The infinite is not cérémonious, — if we do not call upon it, it will call upon us. The highest, I think, delights to flow down into every creek and cove and corner of humanity. Hence in inexplicable ways Providence so puts men together, and men and things together, that ever and anon some spring is touched, opening doors into untried parts of inward man and outward world. Hardship is an incubation that hatches many a strong and tender virtue. It cannot be told how inspirations of peace and of the spirit softly breathe upon the heart when it wakes and when it

sleeps, — when this great thing happens and that little thing takes place. The almanac is not out, the laws not laid down, that describe when the first faint ripples may be expected, coming in from eternal depths and kissing this shore, and when the time of high tide. Anxious, lean, and wiry men are found fine metallic mediums of power and thought. In others a plenty of bulk, comfort, and full-feeding invite the amenities of learning, — manifest the noble and the generous. Excellence develops under camel's hair and a girdle in the desert, and in the palace of an Augustus and of a de Medici. The good and the true flies high and flies low, and makes its nest in all places. The country is a battery, the city is a battery to touch and be charged by. A good dinner, for a short method with the sinners, makes mellow and generous and Christian at the time. Be wise and thou shalt ask alms, not of a hungry man, but of one who hath sat at meat and well eaten. Before sitting down to write, the minister likes to imbibe. In the sermon one cannot easily draw the line between the tea and the Holy Spirit. The one is appointed by God, and the other is appointed of God. Perhaps the kindly influence of the one may be a sort of John the Baptist, and forerunner of the other, to the good man and preacher. Who can explain the ways of heaven to mortals?

We get the sun only by straight lines coming from that orb to us. Thus is it that that strange ball of fire awakens life in the butterfly, in the oak, in body and soul. Let the solar rays, however, make an angle, and strike off to the moon, and whole broadsides of them be caught by that intercepting body, and tossed over to these terrestrial abodes. It will never do. Such circuitous beams have lost virtue on the road: they will never set the corn to growing, and make man spring up out of the soil. They are moonshine. Place us, in the interests of religion, truth, and life, where channels vital and direct pour out what they have, and where the emotions are at first hand. We do not find Milton in a *book*. Such a wraith as a book is not a poet. Milton, as to individual self, is among the celestials, — impersonal and Mil-

tonic he is formed in the appreciative reader as Christ is formed in the Christian. Letters are a notice to a man, passing that way to inquire within,—within himself. Is there any other Tennyson to a man than the one in himself? The one over the water all belongs to his own individuality,—not a grain lost or abstracted from his English life. He helps others to search out in themselves, and find in bud, what he has in himself in beautiful flower. He and the other masters point to the open secret in the rest of us, and aid us in making the home discovery. If a man does not find Browning among his own conceptions, tender susceptibilities, and poetic heats, he will not find him anywhere. All men are created in the image of God,—no portion of the image left out. Hence, in the day of consummation, it will be found that every man is part Paul, part Dante, part Newton, with the rest, and most, part Christ, as saith the Scripture. We have in our hands the poets, the philosophers, the scientists, the New Testament, because there are in man complete germs of poetry, philosophy, science, and religion.

By straight lines of descent from the Almighty man has in him more than tongue can tell. Somewhat of this inheritance of ours is shown us by famed exponents in Greece, Palestine, Italy, England. There was before the first Homer, as there has been since, the Homeric in man, the heroic, the tender and humane. It is this that has made the *Iliad* possible. It is thus Shakespeare has his double birth,—in himself and in wide humanity. So the other exemplars speaking *to* the human, because speaking *out* of the great invisible and human. “Know thyself,” says one of the wisest. Men and things teach one better to know himself and to be himself. Christ does this, coming along the shortest line from God to man. Heaven giveth the seed, and in these appointed ways giveth the increase. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, because it is not known what man is now.

The words of Paul have gone to the ends of the earth,—have passed through so many centuries, and will pass through so many more: but Paul himself is greater,—no syllables

can express him. What an earnest appeal to idolatry do we read of his making, "in the midst of Mar's Hill," "Ye men of Athens;" but more earnest for truth was the living voice of the apostle to the Gentiles, — more earnest and noble that living embodiment of Christianity, standing in that old and strong hold of paganism. What a sight, never in the ages to be repeated, one of the things that appear but once in the drama of time, to behold Paul, bred a tent-maker, in that ancient and honored city of Athens, — hitherto the greatest light of the world, — standing up, surrounded by academic groves, marble temples, and the porches of philosophers, looking old, gray, and decrepit polytheism in the face, so many hundred years the world's cherished religion, disclaiming all homage to it, and pointing the pagan multitude to the one true God that made the world and all things therein, — himself a disciple of that religion which should live when those monuments of superstition before him had crumbled to dust, — should have only begun to live. But little of this scene has the sacred pen power to transcribe. As we read of the ever-memorable parting between Paul and his friends at Ephesus, when they fell upon his neck and kissed him, and wept sore because they should see him no more, words, by the whole diameter of the world and of life, fall short of expressing what strength and beauty there are in the ties of Christian affection, and what an excellent thing these good Ephesians and their loving teacher had taken to their hearts, and, as a priceless heritage, had helped transmit to us. Scenes in the life of the Saviour, — language can only call unto us to come and look at them: Christ standing at the tomb of Lazarus, and shedding tears with Martha and Mary; his pain and solicitude in the garden; the Son of Man dying when his mission was but just begun, but his mission dying never. How can one reach the everlasting significance of these and similar events in the gospels but through a deeply sympathetic heart?

Is one man an influence to another, or only an occasion of influence? Is not all good influence, or the unfolding of the good spirit, from God, and not from man, seeing that no man

has more goodness than he needs for himself? Seeing another's good example, a person is moved, is made ready, willing, open-hearted, to receive for himself the same Spirit from the same sole Fountain as the first. From that to man is the influence, or the flow of divine qualities. Is it not so? The Creator of life can alone regenerate, revive, when we are prepared: and when others have helped us to be prepared for the inward newness, God sendeth the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth and Love. One may to another cry, "Repent," and for him clear the way of the Lord. That is all.

A word or two more in the matter of right influence. If the lamp burns low, replenishment is not from another flame, but from the public reservoir. The tiller may break the glebe, but it is not his spade and plow that bring forth the tender blade and bud. The soil stirred, and the seed laid beneath, invite forces from above. The little girl in planting a flower is the occasion of establishing a great, a wonderful connection. She puts the handful of earth at her feet in a line with heaven. Observe the beauty of form and color, and see if she has not drawn down the celestial. So in things moral and spiritual.

But, without metaphysical exactness, perhaps, in our statement, is not Christian influence,—the divine working through the human,—a great agent in the world aside from the lettered precept and the recorded act? Does not the son copy the life of the father and mother, and the son's son do the same? What a power then, through this unwritten father-and-son principle, has been exerted upon our age,—has come all the way down the long track of time from the daily life of Paul and John and Peter and the rest? All this mighty force of example, without the aid of pen and types, and for transmitting this current of life pen and types would be so inadequate. It is wonderful how the unwritten power of the Christian life, seen first in one man, then embodied in a few followers that could all find seats in an upper chamber, has passed along down to us through eighteen hundred years and more, with the corrupting example of evil on this side and on that,—at one time jostled by worldly wisdom and by

a blind and selfish prudence, now amid constant alarms seeking shelter in remote and obscure lanes of cities, now tortured and cast into dungeons, not seeing the sun for a season. Again this Christian life lives a few years quite undisturbed, and anon is thrown to the lions, and thousands of its adherents persecuted and killed, — yet, itself imperishable, living in the lives of other thousands, passing along, still along, down the great road of time, now seen no longer in aged fathers and mothers that have died, but itself young and fresh, adorning the steps of daughters and sons. But not long is it before other harassments, and this power of God in man, is seen crossing seas to find some more peaceful shore, — yet there, perhaps, to be worried, and the Christian slain, but the life slain never, passing on, ever on: at one time enjoying ease in a king's palace, at another hid in a cave; now flowing smoothly and quietly along through peaceful and thriving communities; then, amid fears and loss and death, forced to such retreats and fastnesses as may be found during long, dark, and troublous times; then, when oppression and wrong have grown tired and weak, coming forth from inhospitable places, and, with an elasticity which no weight can crush, overspreading continents and islands as in our day.

This unwritten Christian life has approved itself the joy and the power of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by evil report and by good report, as dying and behold it lives, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things.

“I CAN breathe no prayer for the present but that a sense of our utter dependence on God may never leave me.” — *M. H.*

GOD RULES.

FROM THE GERMAN OF EICHENDORFF.

YESTERDAY it stormed ; the morrow
 Dawns upon a blooming land :
 For new days no care I'll borrow, —
 All is ordered by God's hand.

Silk and gold thou may'st be wearing :
 In the night have angels wrought,
 For the lilies robes preparing,
 Beautiful beyond thy thought.

To life's sunny peaks ascending,
 Build thy proud house e'er so high,
 Birds, on boughs above thee bending,
 Sing still nearer to the sky.

Not a care has bird or flower,
 Yet in raiment fair they stand.
 Joyful is this morning hour, —
 All is ordered by God's hand.

S. C. R.

“Do not think it enough if you learn to spell and to read, and to say the words of Scripture. Do as the bees do. A bee, when it sees a flower, does not fly round and round it, and sip it, and then off again, like the foolish, idle butterflies: it settles on the flower, and sucks the honey out of it. So should you when you come to one of the beautiful parables which Jesus spake, or to one of the miracles which Jesus did: you should do as the bees do,—you should settle your thoughts on what you read, and try to suck the honey out of it. But why do I speak of the parables and miracles? Almost every verse of the New Testament has its honey. Almost every verse contains a spiritual truth fit to nourish some soul or other. — *A. W. Hare.*

THE GRAVE.

A SERMON. BY RUSH R. SHIPPEN.

"O grave, where is thy victory?"—1 COR. xv. 55.

AT a Western Conference, some years since, a company of friends were walking in the beautiful garden of an old family homestead in Kentucky. Nature was arrayed in her loveliest June robes of floral and leafy luxuriance, and the sun shining over all in genial warmth and gladness. A gate opening directly into the family cemetery reminded us that, from the midst of life's paradise of flowers and sunshine, it is but one step to the grave. Amid evergreen shrubbery and clustering vines the white tablets told of death amid the most luxuriant life; and the green hillocks of varying size, with their marble records, showed that young and aged, lofty and lowly, master and slave, were alike the subjects of his conquest.

Here lay a flower of one brief summer, its budding promise never unfolded, the motherly affection shrouded in sorrow. The grave had claimed its victory.

Near by slept a buoyant maiden, once radiant with smiles and musical with merry glee: the harp now broken, the voice hushed, and the beauty changed to ashes.

From the busy field of work, with noble plans half fulfilled, wife, children, and friends leaning on his vigorous arm, the strong man was suddenly summoned. Dread disease struck with its fatal shaft, and he quickly vanished. Here, under the green sod, lay that manly pride and power.

One central tomb more conspicuous held the venerable head of the family, a man of learning and influence, once in high position on the judicial bench of the State, counting as his own the broad acres that spread around us. All left him now was a few feet of earth, and the marble slab that covered him.

And not far distant rested from his toils a favorite menial who never had dared claim as his own the hands and

feet God gave him ; now the compeer of his distinguished master, on the same low level with the proud and fair, leaving behind him but the touching tribute that he had once been a faithful slave.

A whole generation here lay mouldering into dust. What is our life ? As a flower of the field man flourisheth. The wind passeth over it and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more. We spend our years as a tale that is told. Such is the grave's victory.

But this were an insufficient account of that suggestive scene. From the gay garden the visitors gathered to hear the eloquent word of the old sailor preacher of Boston, whose venerable presence was conspicuous among us. Standing by the central tomb, as if with word inspired, Father Taylor spoke of the triumphs of immortality. Over his own worn frame, he said, the grave might soon claim dominion. For many a long and weary year he had been sailing life's sea, and braving its fiercest storms. His old frame, once strong as if braced with iron, now shattered by wind and wave, would soon be a worthless hulk. But his voyage was nearly ended, and land in view : he could almost hear the welcoming voice of loved ones gone before. Faith illumed the darkness. Death had no sting and the grave no terror. It was but the opening way to a land beyond the sea and the grave, where storms would cease, friends be reunited, and fidelity crowned, — where God would wipe away all tears, the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest.

To the eye of faith, then, another gate opened into a garden unseen by mortal sense, with unfading beauty, unclouded sunshine, and changeless friendship, whose exhaustless treasures of delight surpass all that eye hath seen or the heart of man conceived. Thus the grave itself is vanquished by a conquering Christian faith.

As we lifted our eyes they were greeted on every hand by the trophies of good deeds done by those now lying dust amid dust. Noble orchard trees, filled with promise of fruit for the living, were planted by hands now

motionless. There stood the family mansion, hallowed by imperishable memories of blessing, with many a relic and expression of the deathless affection of the loved and departed. At a festival on the previous night a brother in the ministry had related, that, preaching his first sermon, twenty years before, in the neighboring church, amid diffidence and distrust, he had been re-assured and helped on his way by the encouraging word of the old man now silent in the dust before us. As we heard the living speak of the dead in sweetest phrase and tremulous tone, of their precious friendship, of their good words and works, and the divine benediction still descending from their character, we know the grave does not conquer all. There are treasures death cannot touch, works that survive the workman, blessings imperishable, achievements immortal. Again is the grave vanquished by Christian character.

Thus vividly illustrated were the twofold issues of human life, — the victory of the grave over all things earthly, and the victory of the soul over the grave's mightiest power.

Let us lay to heart this twofold lesson.

Trite as is the lesson of our mortality, how strangely we forget it, and indulge our pleasures as if the mountain of our prosperity should never be removed, and build our plans as if life on earth were endless. Boasting of our iron frame, battling disease with science and care, we grow confident in health and the assurance of long life. Yet the victory over us will be won at last. Soon or late our time shall come, the ruddy cheek shall blanch, the bounding pulse grow feeble, our strength turn to weakness, and we shall sink powerless in the relentless grasp of death.

In a recent visit to the beautiful cemetery of my native village, newly appropriated from grounds where often I had rambled in boyish sport, I was startled to find how fast it was becoming peopled, how many families were already represented, how many former friends had here found their long last home. Missing from the streets one or another familiar form and face, here I found their names recorded; or suddenly I chanced upon well-known names of those whom I supposed

to be yet among the living. Not like the foliage of the oak, stript off by the frost and wind of a single November night, but like the leaves of the pine-tree, they had gradually disappeared; their places speedily filled by the young pressing forward, leaving no conspicuous loss, and few publicly missed. How few years pass ere that home of the dead shall be more populous than the city of the living! How many in the loveliness of infancy, the charm of youth, the vigor of manhood, the maturity of age, have already lain down to their final rest! How many bitter tears have there been shed! How many trembling feet and sad hearts have traversed those pathways and returned leaving there the dearest objects of their love! As I read the familiar names and counted over the new made graves, the question came home with a tremulous thrill,—Who shall follow next in the sad procession? In our jubilant health and prosperity, with the tides of life flowing deep and full, too readily we forget that there is a time to die. But where are we secure? A false reckoning sends the stout “Atlantic” on the rock at midnight, and she careens and crushes like a shell; or, almost in sight of home and friends, to whom the gallant young commander on his bridal trip has just uttered a gay good-by, the “Northfleet” encounters a ship, and with a brief struggle and groan it is all over with five hundred human beings. The swift engine strikes some unconscious passer, and in an instant the frail tenement surrenders the soul. Or one in the quiet security of home, with cheerful good-night, wraps the drapery of his couch about him, and lies down to pleasant dreams in the sleep that knows no earthly waking. The relentless days roll on, and the years pass away. The most luxuriant summer is followed by December desolation.

“Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,
And stars to set; but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!”

Over all worldly success and trouble the grave wins a victory. In that narrow resting place ends alike all earthly

triumph and failure. In our short-sighted plans how often we are but preparing to live truly when life is done. We toil for fortune, and when just ready to use it our cold hands relax their grasp forever. We build for ourselves beautiful homes, and when just prepared for hospitality and companionship we leave them to others, and find that only the spiritual wealth of integrity and love can be carried to the new home on high. Death sends home the searching question,—What is thy account on heaven's ledger? what thy estate in that city whose builder is God?

Ye who are wearily laden and sorely stricken, take comfort in the thought that here soon your grief shall end. Why so bitterly repine when in a few more fleeting years the grave shall cover all your troubles? Why waste your few days in fruitless lamentation or ungrateful complaint? Let us earnestly do what our hands find to do. When tired and tempted, let us, through the brief space given, bear up bravely and fight the good fight, faithful unto death.

The open grave rebukes all unbrotherly prejudice and strife. How should all harsh judgments and contempt of our brother here dissolve in the warmth of an all-forgiving charity! When heated with passion, or separated by dissension, recollect how soon the green sod shall cover us all. "Oh, the grave! It buries every error, covers every defect, extinguishes every resentment. From its peaceful bosom spring none but fond regrets and tender recollections. Who can look down upon the grave even of an enemy, and not feel a compunctious throb that he should ever have warred with the poor handful of earth that lies mouldering before him?"

How the grave rebukes the pride and caste that separate men, as our mother earth receives in her last embrace alike the monarch and the pauper! Separated through this world's varying fortunes, every color, race, and condition come here together at last. The flowers bloom as freshly, and the birds sing as sweet a requiem, over the wretched and forsaken as over the favorite of fortune and friends. The grass grows as green in many a country church-yard as in Greenwood or Mt. Auburn. Lincoln sleeps as well in the Illinois prairie,

and Washington by the quiet Potomac, as Wellington in the grandeur of Westminster Abbey and Napoleon in his splendid mausoleum in Paris. The dust lies as lightly over the wearied slave as over his luxurious master, and the heavens bend as lovingly over the humblest saint as over the haughtiest king. The mightiest descends from his throne, and the humblest rises from his obscurity, to meet here on common level in the grand democracy of the grave.

“Men must die, — one dies by day, and near him moans his mother,
They dig his grave, tread it down, and go from it full loth :
And one dies about the midnight, and the winds moan, and no other,
And the snows give him a burial, — and God loves them both.”

Is death, then, the dread conqueror of all things, the funeral train his triumphal procession, and the grave his captive's final fate? Ah, no! Faith can vanquish its terror, behold-ing death as the open way to a better life beyond. By faith the victory is reversed. Through death unto life is the order of nature as well as the message of the gospel. From wintry desolation life springs luxuriant each year, repeating the old lesson that earth has no power to destroy, that beneath the clod is a divine power, out of death and desolation bringing fresh beauty, from the grave bringing resurrection unto life.

In every human heart beats an immortal hope. The Indian with his hunting grounds beyond the great waters, the Greek with his Elysian fields, and man everywhere with earnest longing, show a dim faith in immortality which divine goodness would not create only to disappoint. Unto this vague popular feeling Jesus gives positive assurance, not stopping with logic to prove the fact, but on his simple authority assuring it to every believing disciple. Not only did he speak of the many mansions in the Father's house, he lifts the son of the widow of Nain from his bier, and brings back Lazarus to his sorrowing sisters. Crucified on Calvary, and buried amid the derision of foes and despair of friends, on the first day of the week the stone rolls away, and he comes forth triumphant. Oh, friends, let not a shallow

dogmatism rob us of this grand revelation to humanity, — a faith which every soul needs, an experience which illustrates that divine mystery which through the ages is turning temporary failure into immortal success.

"He is not here, but risen," the record tells us. Oh, let that word comfort sad, stricken hearts! Let the sorrowing mother believe it as she resigns her darling to the cold clay. Let the fainting wife feel its strength when the strong arm on which she leaned is taken away. Let it sustain the hero and the martyr as they bravely march to death. Let it banish the shadows of that dark valley in which we all must walk. Then shall we fear no evil, comforted by the divine rod and staff, and our pathway radiant with the footsteps of the ascending Saviour. It is a doctrine of strength and victory.

Christian character conquers the grave. A good life cannot turn to dust. When the places that once knew us shall know us no more, our influence shall survive. Though the tongue be mute, our words shall speak; though the arm be nerveless, our deeds shall exert their power. By the smallest kindness some heart is cheered. The cup of cold water refreshes the spirit long after the lips thirst again. The smile of sympathy radiates a sunlight that lasts when life's brief day is over. Little things enrich the soul with a blessing that cannot perish.

Monuments of the departed rise on every side. How many of the homes we occupy were built by those now gone! How much of our wealth of thought and comfort, of literature and civilization, is the legacy of benefactors passed away! Poor indeed should we be if robbed of all the dead have done for us. The very words with which we speak were quarried from their experience. The freedom we enjoy was achieved by their toils and tears. Valiantly they fought life's battle, and we easily enter upon the victory they nobly won.

Upon the memory of friends how vividly the character of the departed impresses itself. Death, so far from silencing the voices of those we love, only spiritualizes their word, and more profoundly impresses it upon the soul. The scenes with

which friends are associated are forever imprinted with their presence. Words once uttered speak to us again. A thousand trifles which their hands have touched and their taste adorned are made sacred to their memory. Even the vacant chair, the deserted fireside, the desolate home, the blank place in our thoughts, forever suggest them to our mind. Absent from sight, they are more than ever present to the heart. With ceaseless blessing memory recalls and repeats the words and deeds, the looks and whole life, of the departed. Friends pass from mortal sight and come back transfigured, more truly seen than when they dwelt by our side. Petty faults and imperfections on the surface, that obscured their deeper worth, have fallen away. Their true character is rounded out in its full proportions. Their ruling purpose and deeper life are better appreciated by us than ever before. Enshrined in affection, they have passed beyond the changes of mortality, and the love we bear them can never know decay. The grave loses its power, character and affection win the victory.

“When the hours of day are numbered,
And the voices of the night
Wake the better soul that slumbered
To a holy, calm delight,
Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door;
The beloved and true hearted
Come and visit us once more.
Uttered not, yet comprehended,
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,
Breathing from their lips of air.
Oh, though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died.”

“If I might only be a bridge by which any Christian might pass over the chasm of doubt and become altogether believing!”—*M. H.*

THOUGHTS ON CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS.

BY CAZNEAU PALFREY, D.D.

OF late years the phrase "Christian Consciousness" has been coming into more common use. Like all new forms of expression, it implies a new form of thought, which no language in previous use adequately represents. The introduction of this phrase indicates a growing sense of the true relation of Christ to the human soul. That relation is not the relation of authority, as the word is commonly understood, but rather of influence and inspiration. Christ enters the soul at a higher point than that which is touched by mere external authority. He puts men in possession of truth, and awakens within them all right feelings, by quickening and enlarging the powers by which spiritual truth is discerned, and unsealing the deepest fountains of spiritual emotion. He profoundly searches the spirit of man, and opens within it hitherto hidden chambers of consciousness; and all that is seen in those chambers, all that is seen anywhere by the vision that he has purged and quickened, is a part of his revelation.

Christ is influence and inspiration. How does he become so? By his life. Not by his word alone, though that was with power. But the great source of his power was in his life. He is the living word. It is said that there is no truth or precept uttered by him of which an equivalent may not be found somewhere in the literature of the nations. It may be so. Let it be admitted that he, untaught in human learning, reproduced, by the inspiration of his wonderful nature, all the best words of all the wisest and best men who had gone before him. Those oracles of ancient wisdom received new weight and value from the impress of that spirit that was so near to God. But the great peculiarity of Christ was that he lived the truth that he spoke. It was all clearly set forth in his perfect life. What more effectual manifestation of the truth could have been given? The old law was written on

tables of stone. The truth of the new dispensation was written in the living spirit of Jesus. That is the most complete mode of expression. In no form of words could all the beautiful traits of goodness be so described, as to win all hearts, so effectually, as when they are seen embodied in a life. This is the most powerful mode of expression. It is the highest eloquence. The power of eloquence lies in sympathy, which is always awakened when we see another strongly moved by a feeling. The eloquent man is he in whose heart are deep springs of emotion, and who possesses that mastery over words that enables him to give most fitting expression to his feeling ; so that, when he speaks, every heart is thrilled, as, when the string of an instrument is struck, the corresponding string in every instrument near it begins to vibrate. But life is a mode of expression that transcends the utmost power of words. We have heard of the beauty of forgiveness, and acknowledged it, and hoped that if we are tried we shall be found capable of forgiving ; but we see some day a man who has suffered grievous wrongs, when an opportunity of retaliation has come, foregoing every wish of revenge, doing good in return for evil, giving himself to the service of the wrong-doer, and then we seem, for the first time, to know what forgiveness is : its beauty stands embodied before our eyes ; we feel, as we never felt before, how altogether lovely and desirable it is. That man has preached a sermon on forgiveness, which the most eloquent lips that ever spoke can never equal. Christ has been for eighteen centuries thus speaking to the world, not of one virtue, but of the divine harmony of all virtues, speaking with a power of which the best of imperfect lives can but suggest a hint ; and in every age myriads and ever-increasing myriads have heard and answered to him, and innumerable hearts have been quickened and lifted up by him, and the world has been a holier and more blessed place since he lived in it.

Our Lord's verbal teaching was far from systematic. Most of his recorded words were suggested by particular occasions, and had immediately a local and temporary application, yet to the understanding heart conveyed a germ of truth good

for all times and places. But the full significance of his words is seen only when they are read in the light of his life. That life has enlarged and deepened all our moral and spiritual ideas, and has consequently given new meaning to all the language by which such ideas are expressed. Men did not fully know what love was till they saw it in him. Love had, indeed, been a universal experience of human hearts, and its obligation had been taught in systems of morality, yet Christ had a perfect right to say, "*A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.*"

But, it may be asked, in what sense can it be said that the portraiture of a perfect life is found in the Gospels? The New Testament is a small book, and the Gospels are but a small part of it. Can it be that so vast a work is comprised in those few pages? How brief are those four narratives. How fragmentary and disconnected are the acts and the sayings of Christ contained in them. The putting of them together, so as to make of the four one connected history, is yet an unsolved problem. We may go yet farther. Is the exhibition, in full detail, of an ideally perfect life, within the compass of human language? And if it were done by super-human aid, could it be perfectly comprehended by any imperfectly developed individual? Must not many things in it be unintelligible, till the souls of men shall have grown up to the fullness of the stature of the life described?

These questions, which force themselves upon every reflecting mind, suggest the true nature of the Christian records, and show what wonderful books they are, and how impossible it is to account for their existence, except upon the supposition that there was behind them a life too vast and grand to be pressed into the molds of any human speech.

It must be acknowledged, that an exhibition in words of an ideally perfect life is, in the nature of things, impossible. The true manifestation of Christ is the living manifestation of him in the hearts of believing disciples, which he promised when he said, that his disciples would continue to see him, that he would come to those who loved and

followed him, and would make his abode with them. Believers in Christ have contemplated reverently and lovingly those fragments of their Master's history, till out of them has sprung up an idea of a purer and more glorious life than man had ever conceived; and the longer they have meditated upon them, and the more earnestly they have endeavored to realize them in their own lives, the more clear and distinct has the heavenly vision become, the more beautiful has it appeared, and the more powerfully has it attracted them onward and upward. And it has ever met and satisfied the growing perception and desire of excellence which it has itself awakened and nourished. The true second coming of Christ will be, the perfect reproduction of his life in the life of universal humanity.

And this efficacy belongs to the record, just as we have it, — in our common English version. It is in no degree weakened by translation. The *words* of Christ have indeed been twice translated. The original language of the New Testament is not that in which he most probably spoke, either to the multitudes of Galilee, or to the populace of Jerusalem. Yet the essential life and power of his word are not impaired by that fact. There are passages in the received text, acknowledged by all critics to be spurious, others that are rejected by a smaller number, some that to individual readers may seem dark and unintelligible, and incapable of being harmonized with their general conception of the whole, — but notwithstanding these, the beautiful ideal shines, with its native light, from every page of record. By devout contemplation of the whole, we come into possession of the mind of Christ, and are qualified to judge of the parts. At no period has the letter dominated over the spirit; on the contrary, the spirit has judged and interpreted the letter. The Christian church existed and flourished nearly a generation without a written record of her Lord's history. The apostles and eye-witnesses of his life were then the living scriptures. The facts of his life, and the words that he spoke, were transmitted from mouth to mouth, and were treasured in living hearts. Multitudes knew Christ, and believed in him, and

had been sanctified by his spirit, who had never seen an eye-witness, but had received the gospel through many intermediate hands. Doubtless they received it in various degrees of purity, often mingled with imperfections and errors. But the divine element in it was too powerful to be overborne by that admixture. Thus were they true disciples. They knew Christ. They partook of his spirit. They were endeavoring to live his life. They had a Christian consciousness. And when, at last, books were brought to them, purporting to have been written by original apostles, or their immediate companions, they could not but judge those books by their Christian consciousness, and receive them chiefly because they presented, in the purest form, the Christ whom they already knew and loved. Multitudes of them could not be so sure that they were written by their reputed authors, as that they contained a true history of their Master. And so it is at the present day. Men take to their hearts the life of Christ, as they find it in their vernacular gospels, imbibe its spirit, seek to reproduce it in their own lives, and so gain a living experience that this is indeed the true life of their souls, and have a profounder conviction of its truth than they could ever get from the most learned investigation of the origin of the record. And they who are able to make that investigation most thoroughly, find that the assurance that springs from their Christian experience far transcends that which they gain from their learning.

We see then what is the proper place of all inquiries about the date and authorship of the gospels. They are important and interesting questions, but not vital. They are literary and historical questions, not directly religious. We are secure in the possession of our blessed Saviour, whichever way they are settled. Our participation of him does not depend either upon other people's learning, or our own. They who have a vital apprehension of Christ, may confidently say to the learned disputants on all sides, as the Samaritans said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

But, it may be objected, in this way no two readers of the New Testament will see in it the same Christ. In popular language, every man will make his own Christ. In the language of philosophy, the view of him thus obtained is merely subjective. I answer that a subjective apprehension implies the existence of an object apprehended. Certainly, our conception of Christ is subjective. It could not be otherwise. All our conceptions of lives, characters, persons, are subjective. We see in them what we are capable of seeing, or are prepared to see. A character far above the ordinary level, will be understood but in part, and different observers will see different parts. Though each sees truly, no one sees the whole truth. Three eminent writers have portrayed Washington; yet they do not present the same Washington. Each exhibits the phase of the original which met his eye, at the point of view from which he looked at it. Even the living men with whom we daily converse, would be variously described by their most intimate associates. What then can we expect when we look into the wondrous depths of Christ's life? We may continually apprehend more of it, but we cannot exhaust it. We may receive from it ever new light and inspiration, but will never fully comprehend it. Our conception of it will never be objective. No man, in the highest sense, knoweth the Son, but the Father.

But there are those who say, that, in thus yielding themselves to the influence of Christ, they feel their liberty to be abridged, — their native, rightful liberty, without which there can be no healthy growth, or harmonious development; that they cannot be shut up to one source of influence; that they must be free to seek help and nourishment wherever they can find them. Certainly, it may be answered, every soul should open itself freely to all good influences, from whatever source they may come. Certainly, that is not only a native right, but an imperative duty, and no one should forbid the exercise of it in the name of Christ. But suppose, that, when I go out in quest of help to my spiritual life, I meet Christ, and find in him the very help I need, — find in him all other aids concentrated and intensified. I look on him and

say, this it is that I have so longed and sought for; this is the true life of my soul, — why should I not yield to him? How can I help yielding to him? In that very recognition of him as my true life, have I not already yielded myself to him? Nothing so helps our spiritual progress, nothing is so edifying and inspiring, as the lives of the good men with whose acquaintance we have been blessed. Did any one ever shrink back, and turn away from such a life, lest the influence proceeding from it should invade his personality, and abridge his rightful freedom? Would it not be the worst sort of bondage not to be free to accept the best influence that offers itself? The liberty of a limited being like man is necessarily limited like himself. The largest measure of it he is capable of would be attained by perfect obedience to the law of right, by realizing the perfection of his own nature. They who believe in Christ as the perfection of humanity, find in him the broadest liberty, and when they hear a man complain that he is restrained and restricted in Christ, whilst they would admit, that, if he indeed saw limitations in Christ, he would be obliged to follow the superior light by which he saw them, they cannot help thinking that he has greatly misapprehended either Christ or himself. They feel as sure that he has made a mistake as they would if one should say that he had found a better light than the sun.

Christ thus revealed is clothed with authority, in the highest sense in which that word can be used. Authority, in the last analysis, is within. The perception of right, in other words, the sense of obligation, is an ultimate faculty of the soul. It is the highest thing in us. It is one of the points at which our finite spirits come into immediate contact with the infinite spirit, on which they rest. Any rule of conduct suggested to us from without, becomes in the highest sense obligatory, and the obedience rendered to it can be rightly called moral only after it has received the ratification of this faculty. Christ does not set up another authority above, or along side of this faculty, either to supersede or to share its jurisdiction; but what he does for our moral development, he does through this faculty. He strengthens, elevates, educates, inspires,

our moral nature. He quickens, invigorates, enlarges the power by which truth and right are discerned. He speaks with authority, because the word that he speaks is not his, but the Father's who sent him. His authority lies in the fact, that he does so speak to the profoundest instincts of the soul that he commands their assent; that he cannot be set forth without drawing to him all souls that truly discern him.

"THE SOWING AND THE REAPING."

BY V. R. S.

"Every act of man, however instantaneous, propagates itself forever, — inward, upon the soul, — outward, upon the universe."

GEORGE ELIOT says, in "Adam Bede," "Our deeds determine us as much as we determine our deeds. There is a terrible coercion in deeds which may at first turn the honest man into a deceiver, and then reconcile him to the change for this reason, that the second wrong presents itself to him in the guise of the only practicable right. The action which before commission has been seen with that blended common sense, and fresh, untarnished feeling which is the healthy eye of the soul is looked at afterwards with the lens of apologetic ingenuity, through which all things that men call beautiful and ugly are seen to be made up of textures very much alike. Europe adjusts itself to a *fait accompli*, and so does an individual character, until the placid adjustment is disturbed by a convulsive retribution. No man can escape the vitiating effect of an offense against his own sentiments of right." The same thought is worked out in "Romola." One rash, inconsiderate act of Tito began the tangled web of deceit that wrapped him more and more in its baleful coils, till all the possibilities of good that whilom had been his were gone,

and he lay helpless and bleeding, the victim of his own lack of will and moral purpose.

We have heard many sermons that did not convey half the lesson contained in those few lines. If our pulpits and religious journals oftener presented to the public thought the vast importance of circumspection in *all* our actions, how much more profitably they would be employed than in the controversial disquisitions with which we are now surfeited.

We cannot determine what act is trivial, if any act really is so. Momentous consequences often follow *apparently* trivial actions. Were we to follow the Baconian method, and reason from facts, the illustrations that might be presented would exceed our limits. A reflective mind will call up many instances, where a single act has determined important issues.

We believe that moral character depends upon volition ; revolting from the thought that we are mere machines with no self-controlling power. This would do away with all responsibility ; and no crime would call forth our indignation, but only our pity. We know that our will is free, for we every hour verify that by action. The inefficient may plead the "thrall of circumstances" in extenuation of their neglect, improvidence and consequent failures ; but we incline to the opinion that a man generally gets what he deserves. We know there are two sides to this question, but we so often see inaccuracy, inattention, want of punctuality, in short, — to use a plain word, — laziness, accompanying these failures, that we are tempted to think with Dr. Johnson, that "all the complaints that are made of the world are unjust. I never knew a man of merit neglected ; it was generally by his own fault that he failed of success." Of this brave man it has been said, "The thing that was given him to do, he made himself do ; what was to be endured, he could endure in silence."

We must first believe that we are free, in order to act out our freedom, and rise superior to circumstances. What we consider obstacles in our way, may be just what is best adapt-

ed to develop the very powers that we need for our advancement. The seeming clogs may be the weights by which we rise. Carlye forcibly says, "All this that thou hast so often heard about 'force of circumstances,' 'the creature of the time,' 'balancing of motives,' and who knows what melancholy stuff to the like purport, wherein thou, as in a nightmare dream, sittest paralyzed, and hast no force left, was in very truth, if Johnson and waking men are to be credited, little other than a hag-ridden vision of death-sleep; some half-fact, more fatal at times than a whole falsehood. Shake it off; awake; up and be doing even as it is given thee!" And again, "A healthy soul, imprison it as you will, in squalid garrets, shabby coat, bodily sickness, or whatever else, will assert its heaven-granted indefeasible freedom, its right to conquer difficulties, to do work, even to feel gladness."

If this truth were oftener proclaimed, it would do more good in the cause of progress than all those intricate questions and airy speculations about which we can never arrive at any definite conclusions. We have heard of a young man who during a revival in one of the churches had been apparently deeply impressed concerning his spiritual interests. The pastor of the church noticing his concern, spoke to him on the subject, when the young man confessed that he was troubled in mind, and would like to have a talk with him. They repaired to a neighboring grove, and when seated on a log, the young man said that he had been greatly perplexed, and that he could not be satisfied of the truth of Christianity unless it could be explained to him "who Melchizedek was!" And this is about a fair specimen of the themes which are discussed, while practical questions that concern the forming of character, and consequently our eternal destinies, are seldom adverted to.

It seems so evident to us that our characters here determine our state hereafter. If we are happy here, live in communion with the dear Father, have the spirit of Christ, and open our souls to the incoming of the Holy Spirit, we will still be happy after passing on to another stage of existence.

To permit ourselves to be mastered by our passions, to neglect our spiritual culture and live only in our animal natures, and then to expect at death a miraculous change by which we shall love what we once hated, and enjoy the exercise of those faculties which have hitherto lain dormant, seems to us most absurd, and contrary to the nature of things.

We too often think of our acts only in their effects upon others, and it is thought by some that it makes not much difference about our private conduct, if only our example is not bad. But, does not every act leave its impress upon the soul? Are we not all the time growing better or worse, developing our higher natures or dwarfing our souls? There is no standing still. Consciously or unconsciously we are assimilating ourselves to God, or banishing ourselves from his presence. It is with ourselves whether we go upward in the scale of being or descend to grovel as the veriest earthworm. We have untold capabilities, which only need bringing out, developing.

If we persistently go on in sin, we punish ourselves. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." "The punishment of sin may be contemplated, not as the overflowings of wrath, but the outworkings of natural law, coincident with the judgment of infinite righteousness." We must not expect to sin and, by being all at once forgiven, to have the penalty of sin removed. Though the drunkard may repent, yet he carries with him a broken constitution to the grave in many instances. And guilt stops not with the primary actors; our children may reproach us for entailing upon them evils that may dwarf their minds and blight their lives. Our deeds go forth on their mission often assuming an importance of which we little dreamed, — Frankenstein monsters which we would fain throttle, but which all our horror and repentance cannot send back into oblivion.

And when we suffer we know that it is just, we have broken some law of our nature. The same God governs in the spiritual as in the natural world. If we rush into the fire we do not expect the laws of matter to be suspended for our benefit; for so all the security of trust in the stability of things

would be destroyed. Because so many ancient superstitions have been exploded, there is danger of the present generation's looking upon the most solemn truths as superstitions, and thinking there is nothing real, not even vice, and that all is merely relatively good or bad. Because we have ceased to believe in a hell of literal fire, shall we cease to fear the tortures of the unquenchable fire of remorse which is as much more terrible than literal fire, as the substance is superior to the shadow? We use known things as types of those which are unknown. But we are no longer children to be deterred from doing evil from fear of punishment. Surely truth and right are enough to enlist us on the side of virtue. We are "soul-building;" how important that we so order every stroke, that the temple shall be a beautifully proportioned structure, meet for the Master.

And by improving ourselves we help others, and the world is made better. For it is not our evil deeds alone that go out on their mission, but every kind, generous act propagates itself infinitely. The ten times one becomes a billion. As has been well said in a most excellent sermon which we read recently, "None can tell how far the thread of his own life runs, or how much strength or weakness it contributes to the web."

How gratifying it would be to ennoble all who come within our sphere. Mr. Smiles says on this subject, "Contact with the good never fails to impart good, and we carry away with us some of the blessing, as travelers' garments retain the odor of the flowers and shrubs through which they have passed." Mr. Trench says of the late John Sterling: "It was impossible to come in contact with his noble nature without feeling one's self in some measure ennobled and lifted up, — as I ever felt when I left him, — into a higher region of objects and aims than that in which one is tempted habitually to dwell." And one of our foremost men, whom we all delight to honor, *apropos* to this subject says, "I had a friend once (a woman) who was the friend of my better nature; who taught me aspiration, taught me the value of thought, made me believe in the worth of life, showed me the joy of growth

and progress ; one whose soul was so large, so deep, so generous, that she reigned like a queen among the highest intellects and hearts. . . . The life I live, the thoughts I think, the acts I perform are all colored by influences which came from her mind into mine." And this man in his turn has helped many up to a higher plane, and still extends his hand to those who are groping through the fogs and mists that settle in the lowlands of doubt, to help them up into the purer air and broader vision of hope and trust.

May *we* not also "lend a hand" to others, and cheer and inspire some desponding one from whom the light of life seems departed!

Let us firmly and bravely do what is right, guarding every action that we may not have to adjust our lives to falsehood and deceit ; and then, with our hand in our Father's, let us fearlessly face the future, knowing that whatever it has in store for us is from him, and is needed for our discipline and growth.

"I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life or death
His mercy underlies.

"I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air ;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care.

"And so beside the silent sea
I wait the muffled oar ;
No harm from him can come to me
On ocean or on shore."

"How often we forget to thank God for the present blessings he is loading us with, while we are anticipating a time when they may cease, forgetting that, if we are his children, they *never* cease." — *M. H.*

FAITH IN THE UNSEEN.

BY J. H. MORISON.

THERE is such a thing as believing without seeing, — an act of faith implying higher qualities of mind and soul, and therefore more blessed than the faith which comes from sight.

We recognize two methods of gaining religious truth.

We may, through our senses, look into the facts connected with the material universe, and by the marks of order, intelligence, design, which we see there, be led upward to a belief in the infinite mind as the essential cause without which there could be no such results. Thus Mr. Agassiz, in his eulogy on Humboldt, said, "He had too logical a mind to assume that a harmoniously combined whole could be the result of accidental occurrences." Therefore, probably, it was that he called nature "God's majestic realm."

Here is one way, reasoning from what is seen and finite, to the unseen and infinite. But there is another method by which we accept the idea of God as a primary conviction, and then, laying "the foundation of all truth deeper than the external and visible world," look on what we see as but manifestations of the infinite and eternal mind.

In one case, we begin with matter, and rise through its wise and beneficent laws to the idea of an infinitely wise and beneficent being, who instituted and sustains those laws. In the other case, we begin, as by a primary, instinctive belief, with the idea of God, — the one essential, all-pervading presence, — and look on sun and stars and earth, and the marvelous creation which is going on around us every year, as the active operation, the outworking or outflowing, of this divine intelligence and life.

Both these, we believe, are legitimate methods of thought, adapted to different classes of minds. And so far as the great primary truths of religion are concerned, it matters

little perhaps by which method we arrive at our conclusions.

But if we recognize the material world, and our intercourse with that, as the basis of all knowledge, there is danger that we shall never rise above it. The ancients believed the earth to be the foundation of all things, — that the heavens rested upon it, and that the sun and planets revolved round it. Proceeding from this false assumption, of course they found a world filled with endless confusion and disorder. The foundation was too small for so vast a superstructure. So it is with those who build up all knowledge on facts connected with matter, and who refuse to accept as true any proposition that does not rest, directly or remotely, on the evidence of the senses. They have no sufficient foundation for the vast superstructure of knowledge which men have been building up from materials which God has furnished. They who would understand the ways and thoughts of him who is a spirit, must approach him, not through the senses, but in spirit, with spiritual perceptions, ideas, and relations, — first of all, believing that he is. It is not till we go down to what is spiritual, and look from that as a centre, that divine realities reveal themselves to us in their proper order. As an earthly foundation cannot support the heavens, so no material basis can sustain the universe of God. We must begin, in our thought, with what is spiritual, as the centre, — the primary, essential element in which we move, out of which all things come, and by which they are.

Blessed are they who live and move and have their being in that infinite presence which no eye can see, and which makes itself known to us in the secret experience of our hearts. Faith in God, as the one essential law of our spiritual well being ; faith in what is spiritual and divine ; faith in ideas which reach towards a better order of things ; faith in truth and justice as laws involving in themselves forces which must triumph at last ; faith in man, not merely as an earthly being, but as created in the image of God ; faith in the kingdom of holiness and love, not as far off, but as here in the midst of us, to advance and establish itself more and

more in the souls of men; faith in the transforming ideas and influences revealed to us in the thought and life of Jesus,—this is what is to save the individual soul, bring it into harmony with the universe of God, and thus redeem and sanctify the world.

"Two things," said the great German philosopher, Kant, "I look upon with reverence: the starry heavens above, and the moral nature within,"—"God's majestic realm" above us and around us, and his holy temple within. These two include all that is worthy of admiration and reverence. But how little, even in the outward universe, is there which the eye can see. The starry heavens to us are great, not because the eye can take in their whole extent, but because the mind transfers to them the ideas which it has formed, by its own reasonings, of their vastness. The calculations which we make in our studies, beyond what we see with our eyes, enable us to correct our senses, and to separate by millions of miles heavenly bodies which our senses alone would lead us to suppose are very near to one another. We are thus obliged constantly to use the standard which we have in our minds to correct the errors into which we should be led if we trusted only to our senses and the impressions which they make upon us. No man can sail across the ocean without constantly applying these corrections to what he sees.

Men who pride themselves on their practical sagacity, and who contemptuously reject what they call the illusions of speculation and imagination, are often heard to say that "seeing is believing." They are practical men! when they see a thing they will believe it! But is it so? When they see the sun rise, do they believe that it is actually rising, or that what they seem to see is an illusion, and that, instead of the sun rising, the spot of earth where they stand is only turning more directly towards the sun? The knowledge which they have gained in other ways is constantly employed by them to prevent the serious, and often fatal, mistakes into which they would be led if they trusted entirely to their senses. The highest authority that we yield to even in our daily affairs is not what we seem to see or hear; but

we are constantly correcting the impressions made upon us through our senses by the surer standard which we carry in our minds.

And if it is so in the world of matter and our relations with that, how much more must it be so in our social and moral relations. If we are obliged constantly to refer to the standard which we carry in our minds even when looking on the starry heavens above, which can be known to us only through the senses, how much more must we be so guided when we regard the moral nature within, which can be known to us only through mental and moral perceptions! Who, except by an inward standard of moral rectitude, can determine whether an action is morally right or wrong? Who, except by such a standard, unseen but none the less a reality to him, can determine beforehand what course of life, what rules and principles of conduct, will yield to him the richest and most enduring satisfactions? What but this inward and ideal standard can give a young man strength to withstand the seductions of ease or self-indulgence, to go through long and painful studies as the preparation for a useful life, to forego the greatest apparent advantage, if it can be gained only at the expense of truth and honor? What but this inward standard of moral and religious obligation can supply to the young a motive strong enough and high enough to enable them to throw aside the temptations of the hour, to keep their souls without spot or tarnish, and so live that it shall be well with them and well for others that they have been permitted to live among men?

Only this faith in the unseen can take us into the realm of what is highest and best. Think for a moment of the happiest home you know. What is it that makes it so? Nothing that you can see or touch. In all outward things other homes are more richly endowed. But here, there is an invisible, unconscious influence, — an atmosphere of unselfish affections, a spontaneous deference to each other's wishes and feelings, a refinement of soul which shows itself in acts of generous and unconstrained courtesy. And so there is perfect freedom, — no harshness or constraint, no jar or dis-

cord, no biting intonations which fall upon us like a sudden blight. We feel that the higher sentiments of our nature are enthroned here, as in their native sphere; that the finest spiritual and social culture is diffusing its humanizing influences around us, softening what would otherwise be hard, harmonizing what would otherwise be conflicting interests or tastes, and with the glow of religious emotion transfusing into it the purer satisfactions which come only to souls living in harmony with God.

Without this faith in what is unseen men live selfishly. No matter what show of eternal refinement there may be, there is grossness and coarseness of sentiment. Nothing so refines the character, or so fits us for what is best in all our relations, as faith in Christ,—that is, a vital, practical faith in the divine ideas, the thoughts, affections, acts, which find their purest and fullest expression in him. Without this, men become narrow, hard and selfish as they advance in life. Side by side with them are people of a different sort. They seem at first to be interested in the same things. They are educated in the same schools and churches, and apparently have the same ideas and principles. But they live in a different world. The ruling motive of their lives keeps them under the influence and control of a different realm. And so, with advancing years and experience, they go on deepening and ripening in all the finer elements of character. Their religion is one which goes down to the fundamental principles of holy and divine living. Their convictions, accompanied by a larger charity for others, grow firmer, and become more and more vital and vitalizing energies. Their affections are strengthened, while they are purified and meliorated by time. They gain in influence and honor by the progress of thought and life. You fear no failure for them. Whatever else may fail, their characters cannot fail. They may change their occupation, places of abode, associates. They may grow richer or poorer. But their principles of religious faith, their habits of moral rectitude, their life of love to God and love to man, can never change.

When we find such elements of truth and security, of hap-

piness, and of power, in the divine thought and life of Jesus, why should it be so hard to induce men to place themselves under his influence? Where else do we find truths so great and so shining in their own light? Where else do we find so grand an idea of the capabilities of our nature? Where else do we find examples of a manhood so strong and at the same time so filled out with humane and generous affections? Moral purity is mightier far than any outward force. Faith in what is holy and divine is an invincible power in the soul.

And shall these visions of truth, of holiness and love, be confined to martyrs of distant ages? Or shall this faith lend its encouragement and strength to all who enter the walks of life? Our young men and young women, — in their earliest training, in the first preparation and devotion of themselves to the duties of the day, — will they not place themselves under the guidance and influence of this divine spirit? It will exalt the most common duties, making the dusty ways of their pilgrimage holy because associated with holy thoughts and trodden by saintly feet. It will turn their victories into higher triumphs, and their defeats into victories. It will throw around them a holier atmosphere. It will quicken a deeper and more lasting enthusiasm. It will give wings to their loftiest aspirations, and fill out the various departments of activity with a fruition answering to their noblest desires. The beauty of a divine idea is needed to give its fitting illustration to the happiest life.

Thus may they go on in the Infinite Presence, living in harmony with the divine laws, partaking more and more of his spirit, till they are filled with all the fullness of God.

“THE religion of Jesus Christ is altogether a practical thing. Just consider how we are taught anything else that is practical. It is not by hearing or reading about making shoes that a man becomes a shoemaker, but by trying to make them.” — *A. W. Hare.*

A SYMPHONY IN FOUR PARTS.

SOMETIMES our friend, the experienced and maidenly S., together with uncle Hamilcar, is with us at our Sunday dinners. It was so last Lord's day. At such times the meats are pretty sure to be accompanied with other dessert than fair hands have provided in the pastry, or red-cheeked Will, in apples of the same family resemblance which he has brought along.

There is a wonderful connection between discussion and dinner, — that is, after the latter is eaten. The dinner, got up in a smoked and steamy kitchen, with much baking and boiling, seasoning and compounding, is the proximate cause of the utterances upon high and heavenly themes which often follow. Let it be conceded to the materialist that the muscle of ox and lamb is pressed by the cook into that service which fights battles, builds republics, and writes "Paradise Lost." The most ethereal and the gross come, considering their nature, a great way to meet each other; they shake hands and agree to work together as long as the world stands.

Cheerful viands, we have all not unfrequently seen, are goodly pioneers, beckoning on the spirit of a man or woman to do its best. This excellent fact connected with our being was exemplified on the occasion just noted. It was after our one religious exercise at church had taken place, when we were all seated at the board, and when, be it remembered, the hungry animal every heir to immortality shows himself, two or three times each twenty-four hours, was getting over the fierce and ravenous part of the meal. The experienced and maidenly S., when she appears, is quite a central figure with us; or rather she is one centre and uncle H., when he comes, the other, in the social ellipse.

Some older members of the family casually tossed up the fact before our eyes, that, as our years increased, we lost the keen appetite of children (the young lions tugging at their mother's skirts and roaring to be fed). The reason was plain,

and we were all mouth-piece to the explanation, that, when little, the material part of us stretches forth its neck for food with double eagerness, that is, to provide for the coming man and to meet present needs; while, in maturity, the latter object alone asks for cakes and joints. This casual notice of what was, and what is along our march, paved the way for a fine reflection or two of S. "Providence," says she, "has in store so rich and varied resources that times and things, in life and history, cannot be matched, — cannot be put into the same measure, that is, after you have got beyond such insignificances as two peas in a pod, two churchmen holding straight to the same cast-iron creed." Now that the servitor of pans and dishes, like a common-place and officious herald, had passed by, some of us thought we could, at this point, see the head of the royal procession coming into sight.

Uncle H. said he liked the remark of S. just made; and, getting a little animated, he declared that he felt like singing the praises of tea. That sort of cup, he hesitated not to affirm, in a lower tone of voice, to the next sitter, was with S. as a John the Baptist, — the forerunner of the good ideas she always had on hand, waiting no doubt the opportunity and the inspirations of tea. In spite of the allusion (which she did not hear) to her weakness, or in confirmation of the strength of that side remark, our clear-headed and respected guest proceeded in what she had to say. "Well, no two things are alike, especially entities of a highly organized make. If you all chattered like me, and we four like four noisy magpies, or we all said the same thing, as, 'O Baal, hear us,' for above an hour, or, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians,' or all constantly urged, 'The world is round and like a ball seems swinging in the air,' and each of us held it as an article of his faith, that the commas and semicolons in the Bible are inspired of heaven, — what senseless monotony would be these moments of elegant ease and sociability!" As, continued he of the sacred profession, inert and perfunctory performances in the pulpit, on successive Sundays, evince different degrees of dullness. All seemed willing that the people whom it concerns should have this bit of comfort. "This fact of difference is,

God be praised, the sure pledge of repentance and improvement, and is the hope of glory." This slipped from the clergyman's mouth very easily, as it was in his line of business.

"Yes," resumed the learned and amiable S., "this law of diversities is the foundation of *sweet* and not *sweet, true* and not *true*. *Beautiful* is *beautiful* because of the contrast with that which it is not agreeable to look upon. Florence Nightingale occupies a noble eminence because it is so far down from her to the numberless Flora McFlimsies who never think of being a devoted Sunday-school teacher, sitting down patiently to the making of garments for the wretched, or serving in a sick-room. Now and then, in the past and present, a poet flies high, like the eagle, towards the source of light and poetry, because so many writers of that kind are only able to poise themselves upon a much less noble wing. Did Shakespeare ever think that he would be seen from all sides of the earth, because he stood on the shoulders of men who could just put a wedding or a horse-race into indifferent rhyme and nothing more? In this principle of comparison is founded the possibility of progress,—ah, and the pleasure of progress, which is so much greater than that of sitting upon a goal, however soft the seat. Though there be hierarchies of souls, the upper ones and the lower, yet is not there a ladder placed for each of the less favored to ascend by, and for the joy and animation of the climbers, as well as for the pitying and loving descent of those above?"

They were all edified at seeing the *reason* of differences brought out so happily at last. "It is well," added H., "that all things are not on one easy-going, unimpassioned plane. It is plainly meant that we enter into the more abundant life, by going up the stairs of the universe, to speak in a heroic and valiant way. What a high, dull, dead level should we stand upon, in this world, or in the next, if we were all up to the same degree of goodness,—if all could teach, and teach equally well, and none needed to be taught,—all were saintly, and not a single sinner to try the edge of one's saintliness upon?"

Such was some of the various flow of soul at our sitting. The nervous forces of the man had ceased to expend themselves upon chicken and pie in meeting the calls of appetite ; and the secretion of ideas, amid the convolutions of the brain, had set in, as it should, and as well becometh the post-prandial hour once a week, to be sure.

The text of difference there is between growing children and grown men not being all preached out, it was suggested by our ready H., that if human experiences, as soon as we are done with them, were labelled and packed away, we should not, after ever so many years, find any two lots marked just alike. "Mutations," said he, "dwell thick in the inner life, while outward fortune and circumstances are but another name for the same variations. And there is no other explanation, than that strong fastenings unite us with an infinite power which, in good time, ever takes our train of interests, instincts, and outreaching faculties forward to new scenes and new relations, that these may work the divine will upon man. I once made a visit to a beautiful town in Maine. It was summer. Old friends were plenty there, and new acquaintances added much to our pleasure. One fine morning saw a horse and carriage at the door of each dweller in the village, reckoned in our charming circle. Thus provided for by the pre-ordaining Intelligence above that knew, before the world was, what would be gratifying to us on that day of July, 1853, and looked after by thoughtful mortals, the kind agents, who directed the steeds to be tackled, we sought a gem of a lake a few miles away."

Uncle Hamilcar, at this point, assured his hearers, that they knew he was not relating this for the sake of the story and of the incidents, like many novel-makers, but for the eternal philosophy of the thing. Should he, in *appearance*, fall into the style of "a solitary horseman might have been seen wending his way," they well knew it was only in appearance. A healthy curiosity, they were told, would concentrate not in any thrilling incidents, for he had none to bring forward, but in this one incident, complete in its simplicity, without garniture, this happy affair that took place, having waited

the day through an immeasurable period of antecedent eternity. And that same curiosity inquired, Would the same ever occur again in the after-time, near, or however remote? That was the absorbing part before them.

"Well then," H. resumed, "we proceeded on our ride over plain, up hill and down, now shooting along a half-mile stretch through a flood of sunshine, now bathing in the grateful shade of woods. This was the first time, since the creation, just this thing had come off, and everything appeared at its best and in its most jovial humor, from the lowermost horse-shoes that clinked and sped along the solid ground, to the topmost ribbons that fluttered pleasantly in the breeze at each gentleman's side. Delightful was the locomotion through the abundant freshness of earth and air, delightful the alighting, like a swarm of bees, when the flight has ended, on the shore of the clear sparkling waters. Exhilarating, here and there and all around, the bursts of wit and merriment—a general fusilade, as when meteors fly from every quarter of the heavens. Brisk and lively as a mountain brook was the speech between one and one, when the party had paired off, and the conversation from the exuberance and obliquity of filling all the air, and being addressed to no one in particular, had settled down into the direct, playing back and forth in private like a shuttle, from this person to that."

All the depth and plurality of joys we had that day were too great to be here recited. Some of us said, let us have this repeated next summer. Why was it not? The law of difference between one season and the next struck in ahead of us and stood in the way. Removals, a sick friend, White Mountains and the like intervened.

"It is thus," said the pastor, "the line of our weeks and months lengthens itself out. Have you heard a sailor's long yarn, when an interval between two voyages leaves him high and dry in town a little while; or, old and past handling the ropes, as he sits by the fire of an evening, and in fancy sails the seas over again? Now he puts a comfortable harbor behind the wave and far back in the horizon. Now, comfortable quarters on shore dropped out of mind, he sweeps

cheerily along with a fair wind and the prospect of inviting waters. At one time the quiet sunshine gilds the deck, making the unsteady plain wear a pleasing aspect; at another, storm and fury howl through the rigging. Breakers and a lee-shore set down on the chart, must often move the helm and turn the sail,—a fact the weather-beaten wanderer does not forget to mention. It was gladsome in his youth and vigor, sailing among the Spice Islands in tropic latitudes. Very different the hair-breadth escapes he recounts when his substantial craft is exchanged for a single plank and a threatening surf; or when his ship is almost crushed, like an egg-shell, between two icebergs. Such," continued the pastor, "is the long thread of life, spun from off Time's big round distaff, and thrown down here and there for you and me." "Yes," said the teacher's wife, who had known some of the tacks and turns of fortune, "there is always, in the store-house of vicissitudes and possibilities, a plenty of material, unlike that last brought out, for the next day's waiting measure,—for the growth and new terminal bud of the ensuing year. I once had an experience in Massachusetts which, in this council we are holding to consider the fates, or rather the ways of Providence, is brought to mind by the illustration, just given, of uncle H., in Maine. Our stakes were at the time set down amid rural scenes, and very grateful was it that the city, one summer, gave up to me some very dear friends for a few weeks. There was, in the place where my country head was accustomed to lie, a plenty of country living,—the supply of such needs as farms and hills, and good, native, noble souls, dwelling among the hills. But the arrival now from far away touched upon a side of one's being, where the social shutters, looking towards the metropolis, had long been up, and the hinges grown rusty. (Every one needs to oscillate between sleeping and waking, between country and city, as a pendulum swings back and forth and keeps respectable time). Yet that obscurity was glad to flee before the genial light of the new countenances, and the dull oxidation just noticed, to wear off under the play of pleasant intercourse."—"Oh, how I do like," said the energetic and

progressive S., "to see people's houses broken into, and the owls and bats of darkness driven out by the birds of day, — that is to say, by new ideas, aims of a higher flight, and social improvements." — "Well," continued the interrupted lady, "the next summer was entirely bare of any such enlivening expedition to that place from the Hub.

"Yes," said the other head of the family, "the last performance in the drama in which we are all actors, positively, as the professional players say, will not be repeated."

"That is the truth" said H. "Another play is always in preparation, immediately succeeding the last, to be put upon the stage, with all the fit accompaniments for which our theatre, the *Globe*, has been so long noted."

Then our symphony closed, with this strain ascending unitedly from all hearts, — plenty of time is there, and such like duration ahead, for immortals, from the first moments, yet no time to spare for rehearsals before the enactment of each one's main part in life, and none for repetition after. For, only think, infinite for our profit and glory, and for the scope of God's grace, is the varied programme to be gone through with.

Then, so to speak, the tables were turned, and the social resolved itself into the other element of man's double being, into individual silence, musing, individual reading, walking, napping, recruiting.

B.

Maple Hills, Rowe.

THE GOLDEN CHAIN. — We are often let down to great depths of anguish ; but the cord that binds us to the Infinite is never broken. It may corrode in passing through the damp and sunless places, and sometimes be buried in the earth far from our sight ; but the links are never broken, never loosed, although the rust of sin may lie long upon the chain, — the rust that gathers from the dew of midnight tears. This chain of love may sometimes lie about our feet, impeding all our steps ; but it is the chain our Father holds, one end of which is bright with radiant life, and a golden chain held by tireless hand, — the hand of One who never fails to reward his erring children with crowns of immortal life and love. — *Mrs. J. S. Adams.*

COVETOUSNESS.

BY PROF. C. C. SHACKFORD.

COVETOUSNESS is used, for the most part, in connection with one particular form of it, the desire of money. And this is the most striking manifestation under which it is presented. As a representative of possessions of all kinds, money is that concrete word which expresses what can be obtained by its means. But the word "covetousness" has a much broader meaning, namely, that earnest desire to make one's own, and possess for one's self, what belongs rightfully to another. There are numberless covetous persons who desire no man's silver or gold; no man's houses or lands, no man's external possessions of any kind; for the commandment not to covet is exceeding broad, and the state pointed out very subtle and universal. The longing after some particular thing that he may have it for his own, irrespective of all others' right, is the essential principle of covetousness. And as those who are associated with a man by personal ties are often but an extended self, a man may covet for his child or friend as well as for himself. He may earnestly desire for them what does not belong to them, and may be willing to deprive others of what is theirs for the exclusive benefit of those attached to him by personal relations.

Let us use the most general form of covetousness as an illustration of the whole subject. The man covetous of gain directs his efforts to that end, and all the streams of thought and will flow into that channel. Every object is seen in that light of profit or loss. All impulses, desires and purposes tend in that direction, until he loses the idea of money as desirable for what can be procured with it, or as a means of benefit for those with whom he is connected, and becomes that lowest of idolators, an avaricious miser. He desires to possess and possess, irrespective of any use which may be performed, or any rights which may be infringed. He is anxious only to increase his own property and swell the sum

of his own gains. The whole universe is related to him by this one tie. Take that away and all the world seems toppled down and out of place.

So a man may be covetous of reputation, eager only to gain for himself a name and a renown which shall eclipse all others. It is himself that he longs to see honored and glorified, and his own name in the mouths of thousands, and his own praise shouted in the voices of the crowd. Each merit in another is but a rival claimant to the credit due to himself; each service to humanity, which may obscure his light, is an evil and not a blessing in his eyes. He looks at all men and all events as but the agents to accomplish his own cherished ends, until envy, detraction and hostile fear and politic cunning eat out every generous feeling, every warm enthusiasm, and every noble endeavor.

So a man may be covetous of enjoyment and sensuous delight. He may place his own ease and his own chosen pleasures, whether intellectual or corporeal, whether of the mind or body, as the end of all living, until all other objects fade away as having to him any reality, and he becomes a selfish epicure in taste, — an epicure in domestic comfort — an epicure in study — and even an epicure in all the emotions of the heart. Himself is his centre and end — around himself revolves the little world with which he is conversant, — and all its inhabitants and all its available means are but tributaries to his own loves, and valued as adding to his own exclusive good. So in a thousand forms we see all around us the developments of covetousness. Even in religion we see those who covet numbers of disciples that their own boundaries may be enlarged; who covet the methods and doctrines of others, that their own forms may become more popular; who call themselves by accepted names that they may disarm criticism, and multiply adherents, — in a word, we see those who would be most of all displeased, if the sum of human good were increased by any other than their instrumentality and their elected methods of proceeding. Often thus religion, philanthropy, virtue itself, become means to a private end, instead of being universal, impersonal and holy ends.

A vicious covetousness corrupts and overlays the most specious appearances of good endeavor wherever a person desires or seeks to appropriate to himself that which does not belong to him in the constitution of his own nature, in the uses for which he is fitted and conformed, and in circumstances and events around him which are the Providence of God.

The lust after wealth, power, greatness, enjoyment, is but the external and more evident form of that self-love which is to be eradicated from the heart, before the spirit of the command can be complied with, which enjoins us to love the Lord our God with all our soul, and the neighbor as ourselves. We would have for ourselves that which does not belong to our state, our use, our actual need where we stand in the great economy of the divine Providence, that makes our misery, our sadness, our sin and our suffering in the world. We desire for ourselves without remembering that the Creator has other children whose happiness is no less dear to him than our own is to our own hearts. We worry our souls with anxious cares to attain that which will not abide as our possession. We send forth useless longings for that which pleases the fancy or excites the passing emotion of satisfaction, without knowing or considering whether our own real good or the good of our fellow-men will thereby be promoted. We long to be in some other place or some other sphere more extended and cheering to appearance, — to have this one's knowledge, and that one's fair gifts, without remembering that in the infinitely various universe of souls there is need for each individual and each society and each nation perfected in that special and peculiar form which the Creator gave when he called each into being, and placed it amid the scenes and circumstances and the stream of events wherein it floats; whose influences have become incorporated as part of the essential nature, and as indicative of the future destiny.

How has this covetousness stained the page of each nation's history, wetting the fair fields with human blood! A selfish policy of national appropriation, to build up their own

country's prosperity, if need be, at the expense of all other peoples, has been lauded as the highest statesmanship and the grandest achievements of political effort. Everywhere monopolies, interventions, oppressive enactments, cruel restrictions and unjust privileges, through the desire to improve upon Providence, and interfere with the divine laws of growth and native power. Especially in the treatment of weaker nations, and so-called inferior races, has this national covetousness been evident. And the brightest, most hopeful feature of our present age is, that science itself demonstrates that the greatest good of each people is dependent upon, and included in, the good of all other peoples. Significant too, is the protest that goes up from some in every civilized nation, connected as all the countries now are by ties of intercourse, commerce, literature, art and invention,—when justice is outraged and the common humanities trampled under foot. The oppressed and the wronged have found a tongue, yea, thousands of tongues, and the cry will not be in vain. Well has it been said, "that the several nations of the earth will, at a future period, stand forth with a distinctness of character which cannot now be conceived of. The part which each is to perform, in the regeneration of the world, will become more and more distinctly marked and universally acknowledged; and every nation will be found to possess resources in its own moral and intellectual character, and in its own natural productions, which will render it essential to the well-being and happiness of the whole. Every government must find that the real good of its own people precisely harmonizes with that of others. Then will the nations of the earth resemble well-organized parts of the same body, and no longer convert that light which is given them for the benefit of their brethren into an instrument by which they are degraded and enslaved."

As it is with nations, so is it with societies and individual men. The path of blessedness and true progress is that of doing the use for which each man is fitted, and accepting the conditions of his nature and his environment without self-reference, or selfish longings, or the desire of exclusive good.

There is a talent, a fitness, a capacity for ministering to the common good, which is to be developed by purity, simplicity and earnest devotedness to duty immediately present and pressing, which all desires and longings for unrelated good only interfere with and pervert. Why should we desire to be made happy only through our own chosen way, or that which others follow so blindly? Is that way so sure, and are we so clear-sighted and wise? Can we see the bearing of any event upon the next moment of time? Can we tell how it shall affect our state, or fall into the rhythmic order of the world? Shall not He order, and we accept as his ordering, who directs all with reference to the eternal good of each and all in all created worlds?

"We cannot say the morning sun fulfills
Ingloriously its course; nor that the clear
Strong stars, without significance, insphere
Our habitation. We, meantime, our ills
Heap up against this good; and lift a cry
Against this work-day world, this ill-spread feast,
As if ourselves were better certainly
Than what we come to. Maker and High Priest,
I ask thee not my joys to multiply, —
Only to make me worthier of the least."

So does the heart pray that is freed from covetousness, and is learning the divine lessons of renunciation, of patience and of love.

After all our vain longings and our refusals to be blest, except the blessing shall comport with our own blind desires, we have only one prescribed way in which to walk and one only form of good wherein lies for us the choicest benefit. The writhings and contortions of rebellious wills, of frustrated hopes and unaccomplished endeavors, must at last yield to the touch of the divine spirit of cheerful acceptance of the Higher Will. Everything else has only postponed, instead of promoting, the highest good. In eagerly stretching beyond, to see in the distance some pictured glory of a coveted good, the soul stumbles and falls, missing that joy and help which was before the eye and within the grasp. It would fain be

entranced with saintly rapture of purest, fire-tried spirits, ascending bright and glorified from their much tribulation, and white with the glistening raiment of holiness, triumphant over every form of selfishness and sin, it would have their joy, and misses, in the craving its own best heritage of peaceful repose and cheerful hope. It would have, not God's will, but God's rewards. It would have, not holiness, not submission, not duty and its hardnesses, not love and its renunciations,—but a bliss which it fancies, and a state which gleams with delusive glory.

The real nature and extent of covetousness is seen, when we take into consideration the difference there is between that state which looks at everything with a desire to obtain some personal and peculiar benefit, and that state which is content to be and do what it can and where it is, as a part of the Creator's whole. There is something vulgar in the race for power and wealth, for personal distinction and extra privileges and superior elevation. But more than this: it is true, as the spiritual Fenelon says, "that whoever regards *any grace* even, with the pleasure of appropriation, turns it into poison. As we abstain from desiring to possess ourselves *in our own way*, we lose ourselves in God." And here we touch upon the great reality of all spiritual blessings, the only essential good. That which we all really need in this respect we shall grow into as we become pure and simple, free from desire and from personal greed. "To abstain from possessing ourselves in our own way," is to place ourselves in that current of influence and activity wherein we shall receive what is best adapted to our state, and shall do what we can do with spontaneous and joyous freedom and ease. It is one thing to be drawn by the attraction of the beautiful and true, and another to desire that I may be their individual possessor. In the one case, I love beauty and goodness, and in the other, I love myself. The state of fidelity on which blessing attends is that which is absorbed in the object of love, and as it has no thought of itself, so it has no haste to appropriate aught as its own. Inspired by an ideal presence, it has no hope or fear drawn from personal considerations; it seeks not so

much that it may be saved, as it does to love the holiness which saves; it turns towards the good which it sees, and conforms itself to the divine realities, for they, and not self, are the object pursued.

Deep is that utterance of the poet, deeper than any mere personal interpretation would make it, —

“Let those who are in favor with their stars
Of public honor and proud titles boast,
Whilst I, whom fortune of such triumph bars,
Unlooked for, joy in that I honor most.
Great princes' favorites their fair leaves spread
But as the marigold at the sun's eye;
And in themselves their pride lies buried,
For at a frown they in their glory die.
The painful warrior, famed for fight,
After a thousand victories, once foil'd,
Is from the book of honor rased quite,
And all the rest forgot for which he toil'd;
Then happy I, that love and am below'd
Where I may not remove or be remov'd.”

The supreme fidelity of the soul to goodness, to truth, to justice, to right, to what is eternally pure and lovely, is the permanent, the enduring, the satisfying blessing. All that we haste to make our own with greedy clutch passes away like the moon's shadow upon the rippling water-drops in the sea; but the loves of the faithful soul are eternal as He in whom they centre and from whom they spring, — the Source of all blessing.

“I AM often tempted to wish there was not another religious book in the world except the Bible; and then there would, I believe, be far less difference of opinion, and more simplicity of feeling. Were Christ himself the model of life, and his precepts the standard of opinion, many, who are by the errors and ill judgment of even his faithful followers led astray, would be filled more with that spirit of love and peace which marks his character.” — *Mrs. A. W. Hare.*

LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS.*

BY A. D. MAYO.

I HAVE been notified to appear before this Conference with an essay that may furnish a fit theme for a forenoon's discussion. I know of no topic more worthy to be considered by this body than the condition of organized Christian religion in the part of Massachusetts covered by our operations. I invite your attention to some remarks on Liberal Christianity in Western Massachusetts.

By "Liberal Christianity" I mean religion as set forth in the teaching and illustrated by the entire personality of Jesus Christ; interpreted in independence of infallible human creeds, by the highest faculties and the noblest experience of religious men and the religious history of the world. I believe the religion of Jesus Christ demands this genuine freedom in its investigation, and only they who use their highest reasonable and religious faculties in the study of it can expect to understand the Saviour and his divine Gospel of Love.

On the contrary, I regard a great deal of so-called "liberalism," — the whole style of thinking which begins by repudiating the religious nature of man and the great primal faiths implanted in all souls by the Creator, — as a mere caricature of religious freedom. This method of speculation begins with a mutilation of human nature; goes on from step to step in partial, narrow, and most intolerant ways; and ends with atheism, materialism, or boundless skepticism. Of this habit of mind there is an abundant supply in the region included by this Conference, as in all parts of Christendom.

One of its most fruitful sources is the unreasonable and immoral theologies and the despotic ecclesiastisms that still

* An Essay read before the Unitarian Local Conference, at Chicopee, Mass, June 11, 1873.

oppress the Christian world. These forms of unbelief abound most in countries where this perversion of Christianity has been the most violent and protracted; as in the so-called Catholic countries of Europe and the Protestant empires dominated by State Churches. There was enough in the theology and ecclesiasticism of the Western Massachusetts of even half a century ago to explain a great deal of the indifference, skepticism, or hostility to religion that now appear in this region. Superficial, philosophical, and scientific theories of nature and man have also confused or destroyed the spiritual beliefs of considerable numbers of people among us. And even a larger number have been swamped in the deluge of material prosperity and industrial excitement that has swept over this valley of the Connecticut during the last ten years.

But for this skepticism and secularism Liberal Christianity is not responsible. It is found in connection with all the denominations, and only appears more openly in the Liberal Churches because they encourage peculiar honesty and openness in dealing with such matters. Indeed, it would not be difficult to show that Liberal Christianity in its largest sense, as I shall use the term, is the only power that can now be relied on to check this alarming current of unbelief and indifference; has arrested it in many notable cases; and may be relied upon to do so even more in the future.

Perhaps no community was ever more thoroughly under the influence of the old Congregational Calvinism of the Puritans than Western Massachusetts, at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. Only a few protests had been heard against its stern dogmas and discipline, by clergy or laity, and they were suppressed in summary style. The war of the Revolution was a mighty emancipator of the religious life of the Northern States,—in its way as powerful as the late war of the Rebellion. It left the people of New England especially, full of a vague unrest, open to inquiry; and also brought them in contact with the skepticism that went before the French Revolution. The numberless controversies of the New England Congregational divines, and the more

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powerful influence of liberal ideas among the people, during the following half century, need not be referred to now. Enough to say, that soon after the war of 1812 this religious agitation gathered force in Massachusetts, and as early as 1820 a considerable number of Congregational churches, of the western counties, were ready to be pushed outside the fellowship of the main body.

In 1819, a portion of the First Church of Springfield demanded a separation, to form a society in which a larger religious liberty could be freely enjoyed. Being refused, they established what is now the Church of the Unity, or Third Congregational Society, the largest of the Unitarian parishes west of Worcester, in New England.

This movement was most powerful in Franklin County, where no less than ten of the old churches, with their clergy, were thus separated. Indeed the region adjacent to this County, on the north, in New Hampshire and Vermont, was very early characterized by independence in religion. The most distinguished native apostle of American Universalism came from this region, and the "Winchester Confession" is still the platform of this growing denomination. We can remember the time when Unitarianism, of the original "Channing type," was the most powerful influence in a large part of Franklin County, and thirty years ago the Unitarian body, out of Greenfield and Springfield, was relatively more influential than to-day. The Universalists in some places have taken the place of these old Unitarian parishes, and in others added a second church to the liberal body in a community. But, in general, it may be said that in the whole region of Western Massachusetts, including the four counties of Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, and Berkshire, the united churches of these two denominations, to-day, do not relatively represent so large a religious influence as a generation ago.

What are the causes of the "arrested development" of these forms of Liberal Christianity? Does the fact indicate that the cause of Liberal Christianity has failed in this interesting region? If not, to what must we ascribe, at once, the small outward denominational success of Unitarianism and

Universalism, and the decided triumph of a more liberal form of Christianity than the original Calvinistic Congregationalism of the valley of the Connecticut? .

To understand this we must recall the original type of the Unitarianism of Western Massachusetts. It is evident, at first sight, that the entire movement which threw up the dozen original Unitarian churches of this region was far less a controversial, and more essentially a Christian movement, than in Eastern Massachusetts. We must remember that sixty years ago the valley of the Connecticut was practically as far from Boston as the valley of the Mississippi to-day.

It was a two days' journey for young Peabody when he came to Springfield to take the pastorship of the new church in 1820. He speaks of it as "a frontier post," and says he preached eighteen months without an exchange. The Franklin County churches were even less accessible. These churches had all come out of the old Calvinism of the country by a very gradual process; their clergy, who were in a large sense the public men of the county, being the ministers and moral and social teachers in the towns in which they lived. They wisely guided and held the people together; and, although an occasional crossing of swords occurred, especially in the earlier stages of the movement, yet they mainly acted on the defensive in theological matters. They only demanded larger freedom to think and act in church affairs. Peabody declares that he deliberately chose the policy of preaching Christianity in a broad and direct way, leaving the people to emerge gradually from their old beliefs in the genial atmosphere of a Christian experience. All our early recollections of the Unitarianism of these churches, thirty-five years ago, remind us that the preaching of the Unitarian ministers was essentially "evangelical" in its type, devout and reverent in its dealing with the Scriptures; even startled at the outspoken doctrine of Universal Salvation, by the few Universalist preachers, who worried them even more than the radical clergy worry their opponents now.

These old churches never departed, under this ministry, from the evangelical cultus. Their type of polity, their way

of thinking and acting about religion, was a good deal in accordance with the Liberal Congregationalism of to-day. They were Liberal Congregational churches, carrying out logically the fundamental, Congregational principle of religious freedom.

The reason why Unitarian churches of this type did not spread over Western as they did over Eastern Massachusetts, is found partly in the comparative conservatism of the country, its absence from the stimulants of Boston radical thought, and the consequent absence of missionary effort. But a more important reason was the simultaneous appearance on the ground of two important movements in the same interest. About the time that Unitarianism was making its first conquests in this valley appeared Methodism, — the most formidable opponent the old Calvinism has ever met in this portion of the country. Following this came in the great liberal evangelical movement in Connecticut, which, under the name of the New Haven Theology, has shown itself already a liberator of the American mind no way inferior to Unitarianism, and is destined, in the future, perhaps in a far greater degree, to shape the religious and ecclesiastical affairs of the republic.

Of all the enemies the old Puritanism of Massachusetts has encountered, in the evangelical church, the most effective is American Methodism. It is known with what bitterness the advent of this strange faith was met in Boston; how it encountered the double opprobrium of heresy and vulgarity; how the extreme weight of social contempt was re-enforced by the personal insult and abuse of its earliest disciples. The Calvinism of the country knew its foe by instinct, and rallied all its forces for a deadly onset upon the religion of Wesley. Driven beyond the social and ecclesiastical pale, the new faith wrought all the more vigorously among the lower strata of the people. A few of the leaders of society were found, as in England, to guide it and marshal its somewhat disorderly following for an effective campaign. Among the petitioners who desired to be set off, in legal form, from the First Church in Springfield, in 1819, was William Rice,

a man held in high personal, social, and public esteem, and an ardent disciple of Methodism. Under the lead of men like him, a considerable number of small societies were formed in the western counties of Massachusetts. At first they relied on their own spiritual resources for ministration ; then preachers were sent to them as they had need.

The new Methodism attacked the old Calvinism at two of its obnoxious points. First, it assailed its extreme doctrine of divine sovereignty, which to the masses of the people was little better than fatalism ; and substituted the Christian doctrine of man's complete ability to repent of sin and come to Christ. Second, it attacked the kindred notion that the Christian could not be, at any time, certain of acceptance with God,—a sort of theological canker that was eating away the joy from so much of the loftiest piety of New England. In place of a morbid self-examination that was perpetually pulling up faith by the roots, to test its growth, it gave the doctrine of Christian assurance, whereby a regenerate man is made confident of his pardon and acceptance, and goes out in joyful zeal to proclaim the grace that has made him free. This change brought a new spirit into the whole realm of Christian preaching. While nominally holding to the old doctrine of the divine wrath against the sinner, the more influential Methodist clergy emphasized the Divine Love and Grace in a way that changed the whole atmosphere of the popular religion. Under their magical touch the New England Christianity underwent as great a change as the paralytic touched by the Apostle ; and in the delight of its deliverance sprang up, "walking and leaping and praising God."

But the social change introduced by Methodism was even more marked than the theological. In place of the ponderous and protracted service of the Congregational Church, with its occasional week-day meeting, at which the minister presided with the authority of the Pope, it gave the people the whole machinery of Methodist popular union for devotion, society, and work. It called women into the field, and for the first time the daughters of New England were invited to lift

up their voices in public exhortation and prayer. Whoever knows the portentous stiffness of the "best society" in New England religious circles in that old time, can imagine the outburst of enthusiasm with which common people hailed this change. It opened a new social life to the masses in connection with their religion. And it also avoided the stagnation of the severe Congregational polity by substituting a popular organization; always practically held in check by the people, but officered by the ablest executive clerical talent of the body. While the Unitarian churches differed from the Congregational only in points of doctrine and a more Christian spirit, but even exaggerated the obstinate and helpless independency of the Puritan Church, being confined essentially to the same classes, the Methodist reformation introduced a new order of religious and social life greatly needed by the masses. It also possessed the prodigious advantage of being an aggressive power. It boldly assailed the obnoxious points of Calvinism, waged everlasting war, made no treaties and asked no favors, but entered on a crusade bound to win.

No wonder that Methodism prospered. Even in the stronghold of Calvinism it made its way, till to-day there are no less than sixty churches of that faith in Western Massachusetts, owning half a million of church property, controlling educational institutes, and rapidly growing in wealth, culture, and social power. The Congregationalism of Western Massachusetts cannot comprehend how greatly it has been modified by this rival church. It is now in working fellowship with it, has greatly taken on its theology, and, above all, has been changed in the whole spirit of its administration. Even in the short term of its ministry it is getting in line with its old adversary. Methodism has been a great providential agency for bringing in a broader and sweeter Christian faith to this whole region. It is our most natural and vigorous ally; for although Methodism as written in its discipline, and sometimes caricatured in its revivals and occasional extravagances, is repugnant to our liberal faith, yet the great elements of its power over the higher life are the same as those by which

Universalism has succeeded, and which Unitarianism is always advocating in theory and slowly realizing in fact.

In a more restricted sense, but certainly as far as the assertion of Congregational independence and enthusiastic religious and social spirit are concerned, the Baptist Church has also aided in modifying the old Calvinism of Western Massachusetts. Theologically less broad and Christian than Methodism, it has been, like it, a gospel to the masses, and is now a power in the valley and among the hills.

But out of the very heart of the old Calvinism of Connecticut came another movement which has helped essentially to change the whole complexion of its theology, and has waged perpetual war against the old iron spirit in doctrine and life. It has held to the formal statements of the Westminster creed, while it has filled those old dogmatic bottles with a new wine of thought and faith that has strained them to the uttermost, not unfrequently rending them past the hope of permanent repair. It is of little consequence what disclaimers, professors in the chair, or pastors in the pulpit, make about the significance of this "New Departure." The Christian religion as preached by the great New Haven divines, by Bushnell, by the Beechers, by the majority of Congregational ministers under forty, in Western Massachusetts to-day, — is substantially another religion from that preached in the same region half a century ago. The people are better judges of the general aspect of a religion than the clergy; for they know *where the emphasis comes in*. And the emphasis of what the people call "Liberal Orthodoxy" in Western Massachusetts now, is essentially the same as of the Liberal Christianity of Peabody and Ware and Channing, and the whole body of the older Unitarian churches in this valley. There are no more hindrances to a young Congregational Orthodox preacher going over to virtual agreement with the principles of Liberal Christianity now, than in an Unitarian minister's adopting Universalism thirty years ago; and we suppose no Christian man or woman in any of these churches would be greatly worried because of a growing expansion of his creed. While many of us could not con-

scientiously sustain churches founded on such formal confessions of faith, few of us would refuse to acknowledge that this advancing Congregationalism is rapidly bridging the chasm between Christian Unitarianism and the popular evangelicism of New England. The New Haven form of this movement is essentially the popular, as the Andover is its scholastic aspect. Under the leadership of its great popular preachers, its Beechers and Murrays, and numbers of their disciples, this New Congregationalism is destined to work a reformation in the Presbyterianism of the Middle States, and to-day it is the most powerful theological influence on the continent.

So it has come to pass that by the force of this triple influence, — the Unitarian and Universalist, the Methodist and Baptist, and the Reformed Congregationalist churches, — the old Calvinism of Western Massachusetts has become the "sick man" of the region; and exists only as an obstinate patient in a hospital, alternately prayed for and patched up by its best friends. Its old haunts are deserted, its camp-fires are gone out, and its usefulness is past. The Christian people of New England are far more religious in every Christian sense than they were under its guidance. Its place is taken by a religion called "Evangelical," and far more deserving the name than it; but in its whole central spirit far more allied to Christian Liberalism than any Orthodoxy of the past. It will hardly do to say that Unitarianism has done all this. On the contrary, Unitarianism and Universalism are themselves only the most radical Christian forms of a vast and beneficent reformation, that, under a variety of local and sectarian names, has changed the whole aspect of Christian faith and duty to the New England people, within a period not exceeding two generations. If we have not been left the strongest body in this advancing army of the Lord Jesus Christ, let us rejoice that we have done our work and earned our right to exult in the coming of a new day.

Every Monday morning the Protestant clergy of Springfield, and its surroundings meet, amicably and heartily, as Christian brethren, to discuss and consult on matters affect-

ing the common welfare of the Christian Church. Only the Episcopal Protestant ministers keep away, and the sympathy of their best people is inside, not outside, this circle. The next generation will see in Western Massachusetts a Christian Protestantism united in love for Christ and his religion of love; differing as all healthy churches and Christians must, in doctrinal theories; but at heart one, and one in its radical conceptions of the essential religion of the Master.

What are our duties in view of this coming unity of the Christian Protestant Church?

Not to abate in our own zeal, but rather to "thank God and take courage," and press on in every Christian work. We are on the winning side in this great conflict between Calvinism and Liberalism in our Commonwealth. The whole Evangelical Church has moved several degrees of latitude nearer us than when Peabody journeyed over the hills to be the shepherd of a little flock of Liberal Christians in the village that has become the chief city of Western Massachusetts. All that the fathers dreamed is in a fair way to be realized. If we, now that our great day of triumph is approaching, break rank and run off to join the disorderly crowd of materialism, skepticism, free religion, or any other delusion that cuts loose from Christ and his gospel, we shall be lost; our churches will crumble or explode, and our name will be fatally mixed up with the enemies of the Saviour of men. But if we can "hold fast the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free," run up the flag of God's love and man's redemption, and start forward with a mighty impulse, we shall hear a vast army following only a little way behind, and the old dreams of Channing concerning the spiritual church may become the reality of our children.

It is our imperative duty to awake in every community where we now have a living church; exert ourselves to the uttermost to make these churches religiously effective, put our hands in our pockets and our hearts in the work. We already have a church in every large town in the valley of the Connecticut,—and foundations in several of the smaller hill towns. Let us place a faithful minister in every church;

appoint a missionary to visit our feeblers bodies ; and endeavor to utilize what we have of spiritual power. We are sadly lacking in vitality and spiritual enthusiasm in many quarters. If our clergy and people have been troubled with too much blood in the speculative organs, and have been cold in sentiment, unsocial, half-paralyzed, now is the time for a revival. For, depend upon it, unless we are up and doing, the laurel of Liberal Christianity will be snatched from our brow by the very churches from which we came out half a century ago.

There is no good reason why such churches as we now have in several large towns in this valley should not be foremost in all Christian work and faith, and aspire to an honorable leadership in the Protestant Church. In one respect, we have an advantage, yet, over all our sister churches : we can approach the skepticism and secularism of this region more frankly, deal with it in a more Christian spirit, and present to it a more reasonable and religious form of Christianity than any. But, as a man who would establish a home for the drunkard and prostitute must be sure of his own temperance and chastity before he can recover the fallen, so shall we make no headway by compromise with the unbelief and indifference to Christianity that prevail about us. The skeptics and secularists of Western Massachusetts don't need additional arguments from us or desire the Unitarian ministry as a champion of their ideas. They can take care of their own affairs ; they despise any half-and-half assent to their exorbitant demands, and have cast us off in contempt. We can go to them to preach a Liberal Christianity and apply it in all regions of life. If we form any league with them in their peculiar opinions of matters, religious, civil, and educational, we shall only be overwhelmed in the great destruction that is sure to come to everything that defies the Gospel of Jesus Christ and a Christian civilization.

We can do a good work, if we will, in the great struggle that impends between the Jesuite Priesthood and the Americanized people in this valley. Already has the new Bishop of Springfield declared war upon the common school, and

removed the children of his flock in Holyoke and Chicopee into the narrow educational pens provided by this fraternity. It is the most alarming publico-religious demonstration made in Massachusetts during the last century ; and, if the policy succeeds, means a state of affairs a generation hence that we shall not love to contemplate. The way to meet this bold assault on American institutions is not to cast contempt on the most valuable side of the American system of free education, its training of the youth in the type of morality and character learned in the Christian religion, but to go to our citizens of foreign descent and awaken them to the conspiracy against their rights thus sprung upon them. If half the strength we spend in unprofitable social and theological speculations were put into good wholesome work to arouse the laboring classes among us to a higher view of American citizenship and public and private virtue, this policy would be defeated and untold troubles averted in the future.

What are we doing to reach the masses of young men and women that crowd the great manufacturing towns in our valley ? We get some of them into the free seats of our churches ; but, as yet, we have no hold upon them. Out of this crowd, that on every week day and Sunday evening throng the streets of these cities, is to come a power that shall bless or blast this fair valley. Every man knows there is growing up in all these villages and cities a class whose like can hardly be found in Europe ; and behind it a vast wavering throng of youth on the verge of destruction. The Young Men's Christian Association has practically failed in Western Massachusetts through the jealousy of the clergy. Why should not we now occupy this field, organize in this Conference a "Christian Union," with branches in every city and large village, worked by our united force, and appeal to the people to help us in a wholly unsectarian effort for the elevation of this class of our people ? Is not this our great opportunity now, to vindicate our right to lead the advancing church of Liberal Christianity in its onset upon the materialism and depravity that threaten us all ? What better use can we make of our time here than to hold prayerful counsel together, and ask God to show us how we can enter this open door ?

TOPICS OF THE MONTH.

BY THE EDITOR.

OUR MAGAZINE.

"THE RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE" was originally intended principally to supply practical Christian reading, such as would be helpful to parents in furnishing lessons for their children, or suggesting thoughts in keeping with the Sunday in Christian homes. It laid no claim to learning or to the philosophical or learned treatment of difficult subjects in theology or biblical criticism. "The Christian Examiner" was, for many years after our more humble career began, the able vehicle for the higher thought and more advanced criticism of the day. Our office was to supply the practical wants of the community on its personal side, doing through a magazine on a larger scale what the Christian minister is expected to do in a single parish. To awaken an interest in moral and religious subjects, to illustrate and enforce the plain precepts of our religion, to make its virtues appear binding, its truths attractive, its hopes inspiring, its promises encouraging and divine, has been the great and blessed purpose which above all others has been kept in view by its editors from the beginning to the present hour. We desire no higher office than this and no richer field than is opened before us.

But when "The Christian Examiner" ceased from its labors, the religious community with which it was principally connected were left without any organ to supply its place, and furnish for intelligent and inquiring minds the discussions on great religious topics which were demanded by the advanced Christian thought and scholarship of the age. Our constituency did not originally include a large part of those who require such discussions. But this was the only organ in the denomination where elaborate and extended articles of such a kind could be published. The religious newspapers have done their work admirably. "The Christian Register" and "The Liberal Christian" have never exercised so wide an

influence and never have so ably done the work assigned to them as during the last few years.

But gradually the need of something more than either they or we according to our original purpose had contemplated became more and more widely felt. With the need has come the supply, at least to some extent. Within the last four or five years, some of the richest and ablest articles on some of the greatest and most important subjects which can be addressed to the human mind have appeared in our columns. During that period no theological journal of any denomination has published articles which lay open the meaning and the power of our religion with a deeper and clearer religious insight, a more genuine appreciation of what is holy and divine, a richer affluence of imagination, or in a style more perfectly adapted to its subject, than some of the articles which have been published in our pages by Dr. Sears.

Other articles of similar character from some of the ablest thinkers and scholars among us have also been contributed. We have desired to have one leading theological article in every number of our Magazine, and we have assurances which lead us to hope that we shall be able to accomplish this. We wish to be as broad and catholic as the religion of Jesus, and no more so. We stand on a Christian platform. We are certain that the religion of Jesus is large enough and generous enough in its principles to live in harmony with all truth. We believe that in its precepts of divine living it is deeper and broader and higher than any philosophy. All truth is consistent with all truth and harmonizes with it. If our interpretation of Christianity is inconsistent with any established fact, then so far our interpretation is wrong; but Christianity does not therefore fall. Because fifty generations of astronomers misinterpreted God's writing on the heavens, the stars themselves did not fall with man's mistaken theories, but shine in clearer and fuller glory as system after system has given way to a more perfect comprehension of the divine law and order. And though heaven and earth shall pass away, the words and the religion of Jesus shall only shine with a more divine significance and beauty.

One able theological article in a month, if we can really secure it, is as much as most laymen will care to read and as much as most ministers will find time thoroughly to criticize and digest. For example, Mr. Calthrop's address, which we hope to give in our next number, may well furnish suggestions for at least a month's careful thought.

Still we shall aim to be mainly practical in our ministry. Short articles on Christian Living, in all its phases and directions, full of life and faith and spirit, are what we find it most difficult to get. The application of Christianity to the wants and duties of the hour is what we most desire as the characteristic of our journal.

MAY MEETINGS.

The Anniversary meetings were pretty well attended. But we cannot conceal the fact that they have lost something of their old significance and interest. The press is a formidable rival to the platform.

THE UNITARIAN COLLATION was got up with the generous hospitality for mind and body by which it has always been characterized. And there was as full an attendance as we have ever seen on the occasion. The speeches were good—at least some of them were so. It was worth the while to be there, if it were only to witness the hearty welcome which was given to Mr. Charles Lowe on his return from Europe with health apparently improved and with heart and mind as much alive as ever to the great interests of Christian truth.

At the annual meeting of THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION an interesting report was read by the Secretary, showing something of what has been doing, the last year, for the advance of Christianity by this branch of the church. A few speeches were made, when business details in the form of constitutional amendments were taken up. If an enemy should desire to have his worst notions of such an association confirmed, he has only to be present at a ministers' meeting where such matters are presented and discussed. Even the admirable conduct of the presiding officer, Judge Wells, was

not sufficient to make the meeting either profitable or agreeable. The details of business ought to be carefully examined and prepared beforehand by committees, and presented in matured forms.

The anniversary of THE CHILDREN'S MISSION is always interesting. The subject commends itself at once to the hearts of all Christian men and women. The presence and the singing of the children are more impressive than any speeches can be.

FINE SPEAKING. — Upon the whole, for several years, one thing has been more and more impressing itself upon us at these anniversaries, as well as in other ways and times, and that is that our people are getting a little weary of fine speaking. The generation, which has willingly sacrificed half a million lives to establish a free government and secure equal rights to all, has shown itself too thoroughly in earnest to attach much value to mere talk. Rhetoric is cheap. Sensational speeches are of small account. Men wish not to be amused or entertained, but to get at the heart of the controversy. Mr. Calthrop's address before the Ministerial Conference was the one thing of the week which left a profound impression on all who heard it. Speakers must choose some great theme, and go thoroughly into it, and arriving at strong convictions speak from them, if they would be heard with earnest attention. Rhetoric does not answer the purpose. Our city fathers have given up the Fourth of July display in fire-works. And is there not a meaning in it?

We were very much struck with this same fact at a recent meeting of THE SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION to consider the question of the higher education of women. There was present an audience of men and women who are thoroughly in earnest in regard to this great and important subject. An address was given by Col. Higginson, well written and well spoken, filled up with answers to antiquated objections, pretty stories, smart repartees, but with only a few paragraphs that went to the heart of the subject and showed that he had any just appreciation of its substantial and vital im-

portance. It was gracefully and pleasantly done. But except in a few short passages, we felt that the speaker had been trifling with us. It was an evident relief to the audience, when Mr. Agassiz followed him, speaking in his earnest, straightforward manner on the points really at issue, and when Pres. Raymond bore his testimony to the character and greatness of the work which might be done for women in all the higher departments of education. A few words from Mrs. Dall and Mrs. Cheney were marked by the same spirit. A speech by Pres. Eliot on the education of young men and young women together in the same institutions, though aside from the main subject, was very interesting and instructive. We agree with him in his conclusions, at least, so far Harvard University is concerned, though when he stated what he thought was most needed for the education of women we felt that he did not comprehend the *extent of the want which must in justice be supplied* by our educational institutions. But Mrs. Howe in her excited, petulant assault on Pres. Eliot, and Mrs. Livermore in her egotistical remarks, failed to satisfy at all those who have the subject under discussion most at heart. Such addresses only injure the cause they profess to aid. Even Wendell Phillips, with all his powers as a rhetorician, produced no deep or favorable impression on the thoughtful and serious part of his audience. Wisdom is more powerful than any graces of speech, and the vital truth which lies at the centre of a great practical subject is what an intelligent, earnest audience like that which Mr. Phillips then addressed, care most to learn from a public speaker.

With thoughtful, earnest men and women the age of rhetoric is evidently drawing to a close.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

No author who has ever visited this country has left behind a more delightful impression of himself than George Macdonald. In private, in his public lectures, especially his lecture on Hamlet, and most of all in his preaching, he has made a profound impression as a most kindly and genial companion, as an intelligent, thoughtful man, as a Christian

thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Jesus, and carrying into his daily life the best thought that we find in his writings. His preaching was very effective. We heard his last sermon in Boston. He seemed to us all alive and glowing with his subject. Only one message, he said, there seemed to be for him to deliver, wherever he might go. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." The knowledge of God, the vital, practical knowledge of God, is the one great end of our being. This thought, filled out with intense earnestness and emotion, was the one thing which he endeavored to impress upon the minds of his hearers. Few of the great audience who heard him then will ever forget. His manner of preaching is thus described in "The Liberal Christian :"—

"Mr. Macdonald's sermon seemed the converse of soul with soul, without any intervention of body. The passion, the intensity, the tenderness, the grandeur of his words, are indescribable. We have heard many other discourses more intellectually great than this,—few that have possessed its peculiar power and effectiveness. It was only an entreaty, an urgent petition, a solemn warning that his hearers should trust God as revealed through Christ,—nothing striking or new, but sent home with rare force and directness. One of the most wonderful features of this service was Mr. Macdonald's reading of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, beginning with those sweet, restful words, 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people.' His hearers held their breath to listen, feeling that here, indeed, was a new revelation."

VILLAGE LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND.—KEENE, N.H.—
HON. JOHN PRENTISS.

Fifty years ago perhaps the most attractive features of society in New England were in its country villages. Worcester, for example, and the towns, about twenty miles apart from each other, from Hartford in Connecticut to Haverhill in New Hampshire, were fine specimens of the sort of life to which we allude. Some of the best examples of intelligence and social refinement were there. Some of the ablest men and most accomplished women in the land were in these vil-

lages, which had indeed their limitations and their faults. But they were centres of life and influence. In them the best books were read and discussed. The dominant questions in morals and theology were thoughtfully considered and keenly canvassed. The kindest social intercourse was kept up. There was room for a very refined hospitality. The charities of life were gladly exercised. The helpfulness of neighbors to one another, in the great emergencies of life and death, were extended with the readiest sympathy, and men and women and children knew how to comfort and strengthen one another. Over all was the light of Christian faith and the unfailing supply from the infinite fountain which is open alike to all. We love to think of these villages on which the sunshine of heaven seemed to rest sweetly.

These remarks have been suggested by the recent death of the Hon. John Prentiss, who for many years has been regarded as the patriarch of one of our most beautiful New England villages. He moved from Massachusetts to Keene, N.H., in his early manhood, and made the place his home for nearly three quarters of a century. During the greater part of that long period he was one of the leading citizens of the town. As the only bookseller in the place and the publisher and editor of the principal newspaper in the county, he exercised a great influence on the education and morals of the people.

Forty years ago Keene was not only a place of comparative wealth and business enterprise, but a centre of intelligence, of social refinement, and of moral and religious activity. James Wilson, father and son, with their interesting families, Dr. Adams, the beloved physician, and Dr. Barstow, for half a century the honored Orthodox minister of the place, Salma Hale, the learned lawyer, and his accomplished wife, Governors Samuel Dinsmore, father and son, with their near relatives, the Eliots and Appletons and Dorrs, Sumner Wheeler, a man whom all men trusted, and to whom widows and orphans looked up as to their natural protector and father, were among those who gave life and character to the village, and made it

one of the most charming places in the world for a young person to visit.

But we have omitted the two most remarkable names, Miss Fiske and Dr. Twitchell. They were persons who would have been distinguished in any community, and the greater and more enlightened the place the more distinguished would they have been. Miss Fiske was one of those rare women who with great moral, intellectual and religious gifts have the power of infusing their own spirit into the minds of those around them. She was a most able and successful teacher of girls, and they who were once under her care carried with them through life a love and admiration for her which amounted almost to reverence. When we met her, she was a confirmed invalid, of a frail, delicate, and nervous organization, reminding us of Dr. Channing in these respects as well as in the wonderful spiritual vitality and moral power, which seemed always to be going from her to inspire and strengthen others. She was mildly, strongly Orthodox, but held to her sentiments with the grandest catholicity of feeling, and found a bond of union with all devout Christians, not in similarity of views on theology, but in a common sympathy with Christ and the desire to extend his kingdom through the world. Dr. Twitchell struck us as a man of greater genius than any physician that we have ever known. He was overflowing with humor. He seemed sometimes to play with disease as a cat plays with a mouse which she is certain to destroy. He had studied the human body in all its parts and relations, sick or well, so profoundly, that he seemed to look through a patient intuitively and to see in an instant the weak point. While he was amusing the sufferer with the queerest stories, he was really searching him through and through, or revealing to him the course by which alone he could regain his health. He was a total-abstinence man in regard to tobacco as well as all intoxicating drinks. He was often found in front of a hotel or a barber's shop, where he was most likely to meet persons who were in danger, and where with infinite humor and by the strangest stories bearing upon their case

he would amuse, instruct and save them. Once in the cabin of a steamboat on the Long Island Sound, he engaged in a conversation of this kind with an old sea captain on the use of tobacco, and was so entertaining that the passengers gathered round him listening with the profoundest interest, and years afterwards he had letters from some of them saying that from that hour they had never touched the pernicious weed. He was, like most men of genius, sometimes depressed in spirits, though on the whole very happy. He was a man of a large and generous nature. He performed most of the great surgical operations within a radius of forty miles from Keene. But no man ever carried with him a warmer heart or more tender sympathies. And if anything were wanting in his apparently off-hand and unstudied way of speaking and acting, it was more than made up for in his home by the delicate, refined, and punctilious care with which their extended charities were administered and their liberal hospitalities presided over by his wife. Nor would this notice of him be complete without mentioning his sister and niece, Mrs. and Miss Carter, whose house was a sort of hospital for his patients from abroad, and who were as admirable in their sphere as he was in his.

In this spirited and intelligent community, for seventy-four years, Mr. Prentiss was an active, and during most of the time, an influential citizen. He and his very interesting family had their full share in contributing to the social enjoyments, the literary and intellectual culture, and the Christian improvement of the place. He had a strong proclivity for controversy. He belonged especially to the church militant. He fought a good fight. He loved nothing better than to enter the lists on the side of Temperance, of Liberal Christianity, and of Freedom, and in the Lyceum days, he and his old neighbor and antagonist, Dr. Barstow, did much to keep up the interest in public discussion on the subjects then uppermost in the public mind. He gave his life to the best interests of society. Like almost all men of very strong convictions, he had also strong personal prejudices, and on that account sometimes did great injustice to himself and others.

But he was a man of unquestioned integrity, of public spirit even when great sacrifices were required, the friend and promoter of important public enterprises, and in private life a man of unsullied purity. He lived more than ninety-five years, with his interest in great subjects unabated and his mind apparently unimpaired. Within a fortnight of his death we received from him, directed in a large, firm hand, a newspaper containing an article written by him with characteristic comments on the election of a bishop for the Episcopal Church in this State, and with a kind reference to an article in our Magazine.

We have dwelt long and with a peculiar satisfaction on this subject. Fires, murders, mercantile dishonor, defalcations in incorporated bodies, and political profligacy, in low and high places, fill our daily papers with their disheartening and demoralizing details. It gives us refreshment, strength and hope to turn from such accounts to the pure and loving homes, the refined, educated, faithful families, truthful, noble examples, the quiet country towns and villages, where morals and religion are still found in their simplicity and integrity, and in their genuine enthusiasm and ardor.

MISS LUCY OSGOOD.

Died in Medford, on her birthday, the 17th of June, in the house where she was born and had spent her life, Miss Lucy Osgood, aged eighty-two. She was the daughter of Rev. David Osgood, D.D., a man of mark and power in his generation. She and her sister, Mary, were educated by their father in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and in the higher branches of education pursued in those days, especially in history, metaphysics, and theology. When he died, fifty years ago, they kept up their studies with increasing interest and diligence through the modern languages, especially the German, and the whole range of ancient and modern literature, entering earnestly into all the new questions of the day. And all the while, in their own home and neighborhood, no kindly or domestic duty was forgotten or neglected. The intimacy between the sisters was probably as loving and per-

fect as is ever allowed to exist between two human beings. About fifteen years ago the elder sister died, but Miss Lucy always had some dear friend or friends with her as permanent inmates of her home. And her interest in the new thought and life of the day was never diminished. Her affections were always young. Her wit never lost its sparkle. In the short visits which she sometimes paid to her friends, it seemed as if a gentle illumination of catholic thought and a warm atmosphere of Christian love had come with her into their homes. Her letters were the best that we have ever seen in manuscript, and we trust that some means may be found by which selections from them may be published. Excepting Mrs. Ripley, she was probably the most learned woman that we have ever known, and, like Mrs. Ripley, she lived so much in the affections, and there was such an absence of display and such a womanly kindness and modesty in her life and conversation, that, though we felt that she was wonderfully intelligent, it was only when we stopped to think about it that we realized the great extent and minute accuracy of her knowledge.

No better example than hers can be given of the advantages of the higher education in woman. Her life was one of the most useful and happy that we have ever known. The range of her social and intellectual sympathies seemed to be absolutely without limits. No one can ever say how far her influence extended, or how far it reaches to-day. It would be saying little, we think, to say that in her native town of Medford, during the last fifty years, no man has been so useful, or done so much for its highest interests, as this modest, unselfish, happy woman.

We add a notice of her by one who is thankful to acknowledge her obligations to her for a friendship which was recognized as a rare privilege and blessing by herself, her parents, and her children.

To one who did not know the loved and honored friend who has just passed away from us, I should like to say a few words that might show what a true woman without the usual marked routine of duties may become. Singularly free from all claims of family, she

made that very privation the means of drawing within her influence a circle of friends to whom she was, in the highest sense of the word, a benefactor. From her father she probably inherited the acuteness and grasp of mind which, added to her enlightened toleration and wide sympathy, gave her the wisdom which was indeed from above, — and which every year seemed to grow more tender and true. For many years she and her sister, whom she loved to consider her superior, made the home which their father had left a centre of influences whose outer circles will never be known; and when the sister was taken, many years before her, she only, while her heart always ached for the life-long companion, sent her affections farther out, and made other interests her own. The studies which they had delighted to pursue together, far beyond middle life, she still prosecuted alone. Her hands were never idle, and her thoughts were always occupied in the best things. She loved to quote Dr. Johnson, who speaks of the duty of "keeping our friendships in repair," and she acted up to his advice; for in many cases she has been the friend of three generations, transferring from parent to child the rich inheritance of her care and love. With the keenest sense of justice, she had a sympathy as keen; with most decided convictions, she had the largest toleration; and she had also that rare gift, a high sense of the claims of others. But, above all, she had the spiritual sense that quickens all other powers, and that grew and strengthened with her advancing years. She was gifted with an almost intuitive perception of what was best in book or character, and her power of thought and expression was eloquence itself. What she had read seemed to be to her a possession forever; for she had learned to read when books were comparatively few, and were "inwardly digested" as well as read: and she had the power of awakening in the young an enthusiasm for the best things, for which many generations may yet be her debtors. Her candor was remarkable, and I doubt if any of her friends ever loved her the less for differing from her. Her faculties were kept bright by use till the very last, and then, as she had long earnestly desired, death came to her unheralded, and bore her to that great company of friends who had gone before, and to Him whose faithful servant and loving child she had been for eighty-two years.

Of near kindred she has left none to mourn her departure; but very many rise up and call her blessed. Her mental powers were rare, but her best gifts are in a measure within the reach of all who seek to lead a useful life. What her hand found to do she

did : and she ministered to the necessities, mental, moral, and physical, of all who came in her way. Her solitary life never made her selfish, and she re-enforced her home with constant additions from the ranks of her friends.

Goethe has somewhere said, that, "as years accumulate, it is hard to keep ourselves as wise as we were." Sad as this saying is, it is true, because few people replace the enthusiasm of youth with the faith which is born of experience, aided by sincerity and love. But our friend used her rare powers of discrimination in discovering all the excellences of those with whom she came in contact, and with every one whom she visited her sympathy put her into relationship. From the men of highest talent and eloquence in the land, to the inmates of the neighboring poorhouse, she was at home with all, and they all wished to meet her again. This enlarged sympathy is wisdom in a high sense.

Perhaps other people may have had more of the poetic element, but in her its lack was fully made up by the brilliancy and richness of her wit. She wrote in the best "undefiled English;" but, beyond a few excellent translations for the young, she printed nothing. She used to say there was greater need of intelligent readers now than of writers,—and she was eminently one. We have been told that a good sermon is not alone in the tongue of the speaker, but also in the ear of the hearer. And she brought to her books what would bring out their contents to the greatest advantage,—if they were good, but if not, alas for the author! never was keener critic. Her latest pleasures were in reading, and she said lately, "I can bless every day the inventor of books." "I can hardly begin to tell you how thoroughly charmed and delighted I am with the new volume from the pen of Dr. Channing." "I have accepted it as a gift directly from heaven to serve as my viaticum in my nearly approaching transition through the dark valley. Every word commands my full reverential assent, and seems to bring me into communion with his soul. What happiness lies in reach of the aged, in remembering the wise and good who have gone before them to the better land!"

We take the liberty to extract a few sentences from a private letter, written by one belonging to a later generation:—

It is a waste of words to say that Miss Lucy was an uncommon woman. I do not think that I have ever seen a woman for whom

I had the admiration that I had for her. Her scholarship and her powers of thought were of no ordinary rank ; and she possessed the rare power of retaining to the end of her life the vigorous liberality of thought which is so often extinguished in middle age. There were few people half as old as she who really lived in the present as much as she did, withal retaining a freshness of recollection which enabled her to describe the early years of the century with the same distinctness as the events of yesterday. She was a grand specimen of what a woman could be ; and while most women will always find in the domestic position of a wife their best life work, such a life as Miss Lucy's shows that the life of a maiden lady may be rounded in the fullest symmetry, and helps us to realize the respect which may have been felt for the prophetess of old. I have more than once, in distant parts of the country, described Miss Lucy as the woman most deserving of respect of any I knew ; and she was certainly one whom it is a great privilege to have known.

MRS. HARRIET RYAN ALBEE.

The following touching notice of a most true and useful life we copy from "The Christian Register :"—

"Lately there passed on from the visible to the invisible things one very pure and noble soul, whom many of us have found a strong helper to our thought of the power of active goodness. In Harriet Ryan Albee we saw one who with one hand touched human life in some of its sorest needs to bless and raise it, who also touched with the other hand the hidden springs of divine help, and drew from thence the motives and the inspiration of her brave, clear spirit,—so teaching us at once the holiness of helpfulness and the helpfulness of holiness.

"When I first knew her, eleven years ago, she had already placed her work of charity on a firm foundation. Some of those who hear me now remember how the first conception of her plan dawned on her, and how the young Irish girl, who had begun by taking a dying woman into her own room to nurse to the end, and then had added yet another, found her great, generous heart hungering for a hospital for such, whose need she had been so near as to know it to its depths. Then, with the aid of those true friends who always stood by her, she achieved the Channing Home,—that merciful shelter where Death has seemed to lay aside his dart, and to be-

come a waiting angel of God's love. And it seemed fitting that the comfort which she had so unselfishly provided for others should be given to her in the same house of mercy in her own last hours. Amid the perils of an admiration for her service which could not spoil her large and impulsive greatness of nature, and in the quiet cares which home later brought, — in the fulfillment of her voluntary vow of charity as in the God-given duties of a wife and mother, — she was the same true, pure, lofty, sunny soul. Dying as she had lived, in the communion of the Roman Catholic Church, she both lived and died in the communion of that catholic church universal in which we gladly reverence her inspiring memory, and look up after her, as we looked up to her when she was here, thanking God for such a life. — *H. W. Foote.*"

GUNNING AND FISHING.

We publish below, from a valued correspondent, an exciting account of a closely contested struggle with a fish. The relevancy of the subject to a Religious Magazine is that it points out to good Christian ministers and others what seems be a healthful and agreeable pastime for the summer vacation. Far be it from us to cast a shadow of reproach on our excellent friends who amuse their summer leisure by such sports. As long as we eat flesh and fish we have no right to find fault with those who take life, that they may supply us with food. But for us Christians to make a *pastime* of that which is bringing pain and death to our fellow-creatures is quite another thing. It has always seemed to us to have in it an element of cruelty, or at least of insensibility to the sufferings of others. Many years ago we fired a gun three times and brought three birds fluttering in dying agony to the ground. *There* was the end of that sort of sport for us, and we cannot think of it now without pain and self-reproach. In all such cases our sympathies are with the bird, the deer, or the fish, and not with the man. Perhaps we are over-sensitive, but we cannot help thinking of Him without whose notice not a sparrow falls to the ground.

With these preliminary remarks we subjoin the following account of "A struggle with a muskallonge on the Racket River, at Massena Spring, N. Y.," by Rev. Thomas Timmins.

I had rowed and toiled and scoured the river for hours in the full heat and glare of the midday sun, breasting the stiff breeze and rapid swollen current,—owing to heavy rain in the Adirondack region the day before,—hoping almost against hope that my patience and exertions would be rewarded, at last, by a bite, if not the capture of a good sized fish. Whenever I grew a little weary and despairing of success, thoughts of the thrilling stories I had so recently heard came back to my mind, with inspiring effect, of sturgeon, muskallonge, and other monsters of the deeps, taking firm hold and running off with lines, stopping the boats, and even rushing off with the boats down the stream; and other tough fish feats, so sweet on the lips and so both pleasant and exciting to the ears of sportsmen. Did I not see afterwards the powerful muskallonge which a young muscular boatman had by great dexterity, aided by a spring of the fish to escape, landed in his boat, but which he found almost too much for him? For though the man got his knee on the fish, the fish caught the man's hand in his mouth and began gnawing it. Suffice it to say that the fight was at last compromised by the fish suffering the man to knock a hole in his head.

Little did I think, or even dream, of ever getting a bite from such sport. The height of my richest hope and highest ambition was a pike, trout, bass, or pickerel. But the fierce grip and savage bite came at length as if to repay my arduous labors. For such another, most willingly would I undergo such labors again. It came in a moment when I was least thinking of either fish or bite, and only of rapidly turning a point and heading the boat against both wind and current. I felt the line jerk, and in a few seconds the boat came to a stand-still. What could it be? My first thought was that the hook had caught to a log, and I moved the boat cautiously. No! or why that strange vibration of the line? In another moment I was undeceived, and filled with almost breathless excitement, as I felt the line being strongly tugged at, and the boat beginning to follow it down the river. Soon I unfastened the line from a beam, and a piece of wood, and began slowing pulling it in. But my mind was busy with surmisings of what could be on the line, it was so hard to draw. Before I had drawn in the line five yards, I knew it was a fish, and not a small one, by his coming to the surface twenty yards distant, and making the water fly into the air as he gave a hard jerk to the line. In he came, but rushing about in desperation to get off the line. It was when within three yards of the boat that he suddenly gave a terrific lunge, and in a moment, river,

fish and all things were lost to sight, for he filled my eyes with water and set me dripping from the shoulders. Lifting my hands to wipe my eyes, off went the fish with the line. Hearing the sound of rushing water, and looking round, I saw what I did not notice before in the hurry, that I was within a short distance of the rapids, and in danger of being carried over and dashed among the rocks. Now the visitors at the spring came running along the shore to see the fun, and in advance of them, in a state of wild excitement, the boy attending to the spring.

The fish followed the boat as I now pulled my best, and had high hopes of soon capturing him. "Put your line between your teeth," shouted the boy. Nonsense, I thought; for what do I want to suddenly transform the fish into a smart dentist for, and have him pull every tooth out of my mouth in no time? No, I must fix the line in some other way. Drawing in the fish to within several yards of the boat I rapped the line wround my ankle. Several fierce jerks led me to understand that I had made a little mistake in this, as I felt the line tightening rather more than what was quite comfortable. On the shore the people were in a high state of feeling, and the boy was calling out a number of unintelligible things, out of which I made out, "Give him the line." Throwing the end of it to him, I untwisted and cleared it from my feet, and jumped on shore. And now for the fish. But where was he? Sly, artful dodger! He had ensconced himself underneath the boat, and snug among the rushes, and was gethering new strength to renew the struggle. Slowly from the shore I made the boat glide, disclosing to view a splendid muskallonge, estimated by those around to be nearly four feet long, and more than thirty pounds in weight. But now, without Greek meeting Greek, there came the tug of war. As the line was cautiously drawn in, up the fish sprung right ready to renew the conflict. What a splashing, dashing, and floundering in the water. It was then that we first felt sure of him. But as Burns aptly says,—

"The best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft alee."

And alas! the most sanguine hopes are often miserably disappointed when nearest fruition. It was just when the muskallonge was about a yard from land, with his head slanting toward the river, that he suddenly gave a tremendous flap, and turned a smart summersault, that would have done justice to a professional acrobat; and thereby he tumbled down our hopes from the heights of success,—dashing them all to nothing, and leaving in their place only

the bare remembrance of a fierce and well-contested struggle in which the fish went off conqueror. As he fell flat on his side, he snapped off the main hook from the spoon, and feeling his liberty, instantly made off for the deep water. "Quick," "quick," "a rod," "a hook," "anything," "hit him," "hit him,"—were the cries on all sides; but all to no purpose. For away he glided in solemn stately triumph, no more to be seen by the spectators on the banks. Why should I tell of all the tempting baits, and lines trolled, but trolled in vain? For as host Crocker wisely observed, after listening very sympathizingly to the story,—for the fish would have suited his table to a T, a taste, and a treat,—“A muskallonge is like a rat: you may take him in once, but if he ever gets clear, he will never give you the show of a bite, or the shadow of a chance, to take him in again.”

“FOLLOW ME.”

Subjoined to the above account of a struggle with a fish, written with the glow and enthusiasm of a sportsman, we give here, from the same writer, a little poem which shows that now, as in the days of the apostles, and of the good old Izaak Walton, whatever we as moralists may think on the subject, the occasional enjoyments of the fisherman are not inconsistent with the sweetest devotional spirit.

JESUS, thy loving voice I hear,
I bow the knee
To thy sweet spirit's power near,
And press to thee.
Thou ledest on to God in heaven:
Lead on! Thou callest me.

Earth's way is long, grief tries me sore,
I look to thee;
And though thorns gall my bleeding feet,
I'll follow thee:
Remembering that thy life was given
To set my spirit free.

Through darkest clouds and longest night
I'll trust in thee;
And when my eyes grow dim for light

I'll cry to thee,
Knowing that from thy home above
Thou wilt my comfort be.

And in life's bright and sunny day
I'll speak of thee
To sad ones trying by the way
Thy truth to see,
That all, at last, may find in heaven
Light, peace, and joy in thee.

THE HAMPTON NORMAL SCHOOL.

We look upon this school as at the present time one of the most important educational institutions in the United States. We copy, in a condensed form, an account of what might be called its commencement exercises, from "The Liberal Christian." We suppose it to be written by Dr. Bellows.

"The closing exercises of this school for colored teachers of both sexes, to meet the educational wants of the emancipated negroes of the South, were attended by a deputation of gentlemen and ladies, — thirty-five at least — from the North, and by a considerable number of citizens from Virginia interested in the elevation of the colored race. . . . The school unites the advantages of an industrial with an intellectual and moral training. It carries on agricultural, mechanical household and schoolroom work, and in this respect is a model of what all American schools should aim to become. With Gen. Armstrong at the head, — a man who showed himself in the war as skilful as any officer in command of negro troops, and who has since, by his moral enthusiasm, self-sacrifice, executive ability and teaching-power, proved himself entitled to the confidence and love of all who have met and known him, besides drawing the enthusiastic admiration of his pupils, — the school has a corps of teachers already experienced in their profession, but besides, all animated with the spirit of the place, an earnest sense of the sublime task imposed and the glorious opportunity offered in beginning the education of a long-neglected and unfortunate race, to whom freedom and aspiration and all the responsibilities of citizenship have lately come. A complete absence of the frivolity, conventionalism and half-seriousness which mark the commencement

exercises of most colleges and high schools indicated in the whole air of these services the dead earnest quality of the aim of both teachers and pupils in a struggle for intellectual life. The solemn reality of the work in hand showed itself in the thin and worn faces of the teachers, all marked with a self-forgetting thoughtfulness, and in the unaffected simplicity and almost unparalleled absence of self-consciousness in the scholars. Perhaps the tones of the voice are the finest test of the earnestness of the spirit, and we noted an absolute freedom from affectation and tricks of a self-conscious origin in all the pupils, both in their recitations and their reading and speaking. Their delivery, as a rule, in the play of natural tones and gestures, was superior to that of our best colleges. And then, again, in seriousness of countenance, in the expression of a genuine thirst for knowledge and in unpretending humility, with self-respect and a proper appreciation of their own position, nothing could be more encouraging than the aspect of the Hampton scholars.

. . . "Thus far nothing but good has come from the co-education of young men and young women in this school. The girls seemed modest and even refined, and we saw far less evidence of any turning away from sober pursuits to the indulgence of flirtation than in some other experiments.

"The addresses of the graduating class were not marked (and we were glad to see it) by any special originality, much less by any romantic or rhetorical flights. They were all very much on one subject, — the present and future of the colored race. But they were sober, earnest, hopeful, and yet candid in self-estimates. They clearly showed how deep a feeling these new Israelites, coming out of Egypt into their promised land, have of their responsibilities. There was a solemnity and piety in their thoughts and language which showed how naturally faith and prayer mingle with the feelings of oppressed races in their efforts at emancipation from the evils entailed on them by an unfavored lot. . . .

Perhaps the most interesting circumstance connected with this occasion was the meeting of a few Southern gentlemen and educators with Northern men of some repute and influence, who had gone to Hampton to satisfy themselves of the prospects of negro education and of the state of feeling among the whites and old masters towards the freedmen and their elevation to citizenship. At the close of the exercises frank speeches were made both by Northern and Southern men, which covered the ground of the

present state of feeling between those who were lately in bloody conflict with each other. In the speeches of the Southern gentlemen, — one of whom had been a rebel officer of rank, another a venerable clergyman, and one the present head of educational movements in Virginia, — we observed, of course, some painful recollections of the recent conflict, some sensibility to the references to it made in the exercises of the students, but not more than was natural and pardonable. In the main, their spirit was admirable, and showed with what good sense the situation had been accepted, and how willing the South was to join the North in all such efforts to educate the blacks as the Hampton school represented. The Northern speakers, while true to their antecedents, were generous and judicious in their tone, and met the Southern candor and good sense with a kind, frank spirit which was evidently warmly appreciated. No doubt the private conversation of these gentlemen was still more influential in bringing about a good understanding. It is very noticeable how little vindictiveness animates the negroes towards their old masters as a class, and how little disposition exists on the part of intelligent and leading whites to hinder the development of the blacks. Probably the greatest hindrance to reconstruction and the renovation of Southern order and prosperity, proceeds from the class known formerly as poor whites — a fearfully large and degraded class still, — who offer to Southern politicians of a selfish sort the same sort of leverage which our Irish population at the North have afforded our dirty politicians here. The problem of the education of this class seems to us a far harder one to solve than that of negro education. . . .

“We should fail of justice to the interest and charm of the excursion to Hampton, — by sea to Fortress Monroe, and home by the Chesapeake and rail, — if we did not say a word of the delightful intercourse afforded the representatives of various religious sects, brought together by a common interest and sharing in frank and fraternal intercourse.

“The underlying common Christianity of men and women, divided on the surface by marked differences of opinion, serves as a beautiful and all-sufficient ground of social sympathy and moral government. How many prejudices were dropped, how many friendships begun, how much mutual respect and affection engendered by three days of easy intercourse between men and women usually kept apart by denominational barriers, we will not venture

to calculate! But we judge that the Hampton excursionists will date back to their short voyage as to a marked era in their mutual toleration, charity and brotherly love, and in their common desire for co-operation in all good work.

"The presence of Gen. Eaton, the head of the U. S. Bureau of Education in the Department of the Interior, was one of the chief satisfactions of this occasion. Miss Carpenter was also a centre of special interest, and was greeted by all, and especially by the colored students, with every mark of respect, gratitude, and admiration."

A GOOD EXAMPLE.

The Trustees of the Cambridge Episcopal Theological School have refused to receive a gift of a hundred thousand dollars from Mr. Nathan Mathews, which was offered to the School on condition that the Board of Trustees should always be composed of a certain number of High Churchmen, a certain number of Low Churchmen, and a certain number of Conservatives. The Trustees refuse to recognize these sectarian distinctions which they say have no place in the standards of their church. We wish that the President and Fellows of Harvard University had taught the same gentleman a similar lesson when he offered them a similar inducement to introduce sectarian distinctions for the first time in distributing the funds of the College among undergraduates. Honor and gratitude are due to rich men who have generously endowed our institutions of learning. But for men who, though eminently rich, are not eminently wise, learned, virtuous, or devout, to attempt to change, in religious matters, the fitting and established usages of a Theological School or a great University, by the sheer force of money, is a thing not favorable to the public morals. We thank the Trustees of the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge for the lesson which they have given, and trust that the example may be followed.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE GOOD VOICES. A Child's Guide to the Bible. By E. A. Abbott. London and New York: MacMillan & Co. 1872.

Mr. Abbott, favorably known for his "Bible Lessons," has written a little book for young children called "The Good Voices," its object being "to prepare little children for the study of the Bible by imbuing them with the feeling that at all times and in all circumstances, whether in town or country, at work or at play, they are living in the presence of a Heavenly Father, who is continually speaking to them with the Good Voices of Nature and Revelation." In a very simple and picturesque way, the author points first to the divine meaning in the things about us, the goodness of God in his works, — the voice of the stars, of the clouds and fields, of the leaves and snowflakes, of the hand, of the year, of the Father, and then of the voices in the history of Israel, and in the life of Christ. In the Old Testament, he specially refers to the parts which most appeal to the imagination of children, the sacrifice of Isaac, Jacob's Dream, the life of Joseph, Samuel's Call, and others. The book is illustrated with a great many little pictures, very apt and pleasing, which make its meaning vivid to the eye. The Bible life is treated in a modern and familiar way, which gives reality to it, and yet there is no irreverence in the treatment. We miss, indeed, the grandeur and the force of the original, but perhaps the little ones are better able to bear it at first in this form. The spirit of the book is simple and healthful, and we should think it a good book for mothers to read to their little children, or for use in the younger classes in Sunday Schools. w.

THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS. New York: Collins & Brother.

We have examined this little book with much interest. It is evidently a labor of love by one who has meditated tenderly and deeply upon Christ's words, until they have grouped themselves together according to their inward meaning and fitness, parable and precept illustrating each other, and the whole developing the theme of the two great Christian commandments. For instance, with the precept not to pray or fast "to be seen of men," is grouped the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. It is noticeable that the

author puts the parable of the Prodigal Son, which is so full at once of moral power and of hope, turning to repentance by the love there is in it, just before the end of the book after the parable of the Judgment, as though its meaning were the more final, as though the judgment of the wicked was the suffering of those who had gone away into a far country, apart from the Father, but that it yet lay in his love that they should repent and return to him.

"The object," says the preface, "in publishing this selection (chiefly from the text of Matthew) is to present, in one body, those sayings of Jesus which give rules of life applicable to all men and all time." The author gives us those words in the Gospels which mean most to him, ordered by their inward logic and connection. In the Gospels themselves the order is more historical, according to the occasions and events which called forth the special utterances. Each method has its uses. There is much that is suggestive in the order here given, and the book even to one familiar with all its contents, is profitable reading from its connecting separate thoughts, which seen together give out more light and fuller meaning. There is danger that our very familiarity with the New Testament may blunt our perception of its meaning, and it is no slight help against this to have its contents set in a new order. The book may be found a useful help for teaching the Gospel, as well as for private reading.

W.

TEACHINGS OF JESUS. New York: Collins & Brother.

This is a pretty little book, and may be very useful. "The object in publishing this selection (chiefly from the text of Matthew) is to present, in one body, those sayings of Jesus which give rules of life applicable to all men and all time." And to many persons they may have a freshness which the same words do not have in a larger volume which has long been handled lazily.

For popular effect no greater good could be done theologically, as to the text of the Bible, than to have every book of the Bible printed by itself; and especially if the greater or less antiquity of the book were indicated by some artistic means, as to type, paper, binding, and general appearance.

Then that would be palpable and visible which it is now so difficult for most persons to understand, — that even the Old Testament is not a volume merely, but a literature archæologic, poetic, historic, prophetic, and the product of many hundreds of years. And if every one of these books had a preface of its own, critical,

well-written, and suggestive, it would then be felt, as so rarely it is now, that every piece in the Bible — book, psalm, epistle — is not fairly to be considered as answerable for all the rest, and a perspective would be got as to revelation, historically, that even Ewald might be glad of for distinctness.

W. M.

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY. By the Rev. John Hall, D.D. New York: Dodd & Mead.

This book contains the substance of lectures given to a ladies' Bible class in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York. They are clearly and pleasantly written, and will no doubt be useful to those who view religious subjects from the author's standpoint. From our point of view it is not an edifying volume. Yet the author is intelligent and well informed. It is very interesting to consider how many different strata of ideas enter into the construction of society, and how slight the communication often is between one and another of these strata.

WORK. A Story of Experience. By Louisa M. Alcott. Boston: Roberts Brothers.

This book, which covers a larger field than her former stories, fully sustains Miss Alcott's reputation. Vivacity, clearness, a straightforward directness and earnestness of purpose, pathos, with much skill in filling out the details, are among the high qualities which carry us through the story, with increasing interest from beginning to end. To some things we might take exception. With all our faith in work as a power in clearing up the atmosphere of life, we think there are other higher forces which must go with it, and without which it loses its beneficent influence. These are partially recognized here, but kept perhaps too much in the back-ground. Yet so it is in life. The powers behind us by which we live are unseen. The problem suggested by this book is a very great one. We are here taken forward one step towards the solution. Some one else will cause the other foot to take another step, and by and by, perhaps, in higher realms we shall see it all.

THE OTHER GIRLS. By Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney. Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co.

This is in some degree a sequel to Mrs. Whitney's later stories, "Real Folks," "We Girls," &c. While still possessing the same charm and the same sense of reality which made those books so

popular, we think it superior to them in style and in the finish of details. We have but one thing to object to in it, and that is the frequency and off-hand way of introducing religious subjects. Though we have no doubt that in so doing Mrs. Whitney means to raise every-day life to something higher, yet to many persons it would seem rather to bring the something higher down to a level with every-day life. We gladly recognize a deep religious insight, a sensibility to what is spiritual everywhere, a rare faculty of seeing how what we see and do is interfused by the higher and diviner element which elevates and consecrates even the accessions of a faithful life.

PATER MUNDI: or Doctrines of Evolution. Being in substance Lectures delivered in various Colleges and Theological Seminaries. By Rev. E. F. Burr, D.D. Second Series. Boston: Noyes, Holmes, & Co.

These lectures are eminently spirited and readable. The author has the reputation of being a very able mathematician and student of science. The subject is one which deeply interests the scientific minds of the age.

THE TREASURE OF THE SEAS. By Prof. James De Mille. Boston: Lee & Shepard.

By some accidental oversight we neglected to notice, at the proper time, this exciting account of extraordinary adventures on or near the sea, in voyages where boys are the principal actors.

THE YEAR. By D. C. Colesworthy. Boston: Lee & Shepard.

Pleasant verses, such as a man might gladly write to entertain his leisure hours and gratify his friends at home, or in the larger circle which he can meet only through the press.

WIT AND WISDOM OF GEORGE ELIOT. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 1873.

A charming little volume, full of bright and deep sayings,—such as any one may rejoice to have at hand.

THE MINISTRY WE NEED. By S. Sweetser. American Tract Society.

This book, in small compass, contains the result of much ear-

nest and devout thought. We differ from the writer in some of his fundamental ideas, but agree with him heartily, not only in the spirit which pervades his book, but in regard to almost every quality which he considers essential to the Christian ministry. Any young man, who is entering or thinking of entering the Christian ministry, may find in it something to deepen his convictions, confirm his faith, quicken his sense of responsibility, and made him a more thoughtful and efficient minister of Christ.

LITTLE GRANDFATHER. By Sophie May, author of *Little Prudy Stories*. Boston: Lee & Shepard.

A real boy story: the temptations, faults, and methods of correction are true to life. The right methods of reforming are indicated. And though the story is rather *thin*, we should not hesitate to commend it to those for whom it is written.

THE DEAD LION, and Other Stories. By Edward Garrett. New York: Dodd & Mead. Sold by Estes & Lauriat.

We like the writings of this author. They are spirited, strong, and healthful. They commend the best teachings of our religion and make its precepts vitally practical. Few stories have a more affecting interest than that of a "A Real Lady" which is given here.

CROSS AND CRESCENT: or Young America in Turkey and Greece.

A story of Travel and Adventure. By William T. Adams (Oliver Optic). Boston: Lee & Shepard.

A very entertaining book for young persons, fully up to the standard of any of Oliver Optic's books that we have read. The moral tone is high, and there is a great deal of information mixed in with the exciting adventures of the voyages.

THE TWILIGHT OF FAITH. By Elizabeth Frame. Boston: H. D. Brown & Co.

This is a story written with the best intention in the world. But it impresses us as ordinary, and, except for its subject, uninteresting.